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NEW TIMES

A SOVIET WEEKLY OF WORLD AFFAIRS

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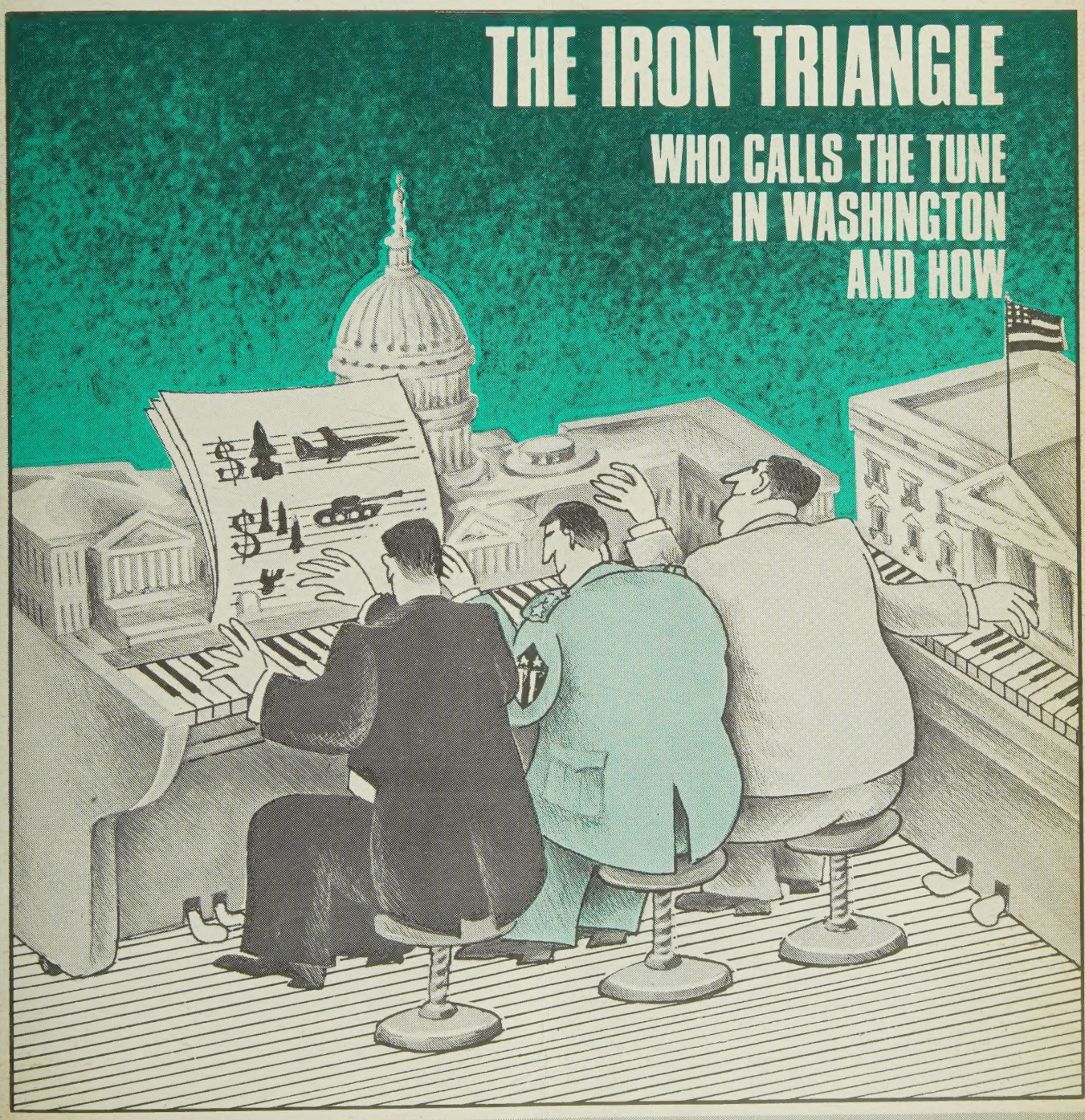
SOVIET PEACE PLAN INSPIRES THE WORLD

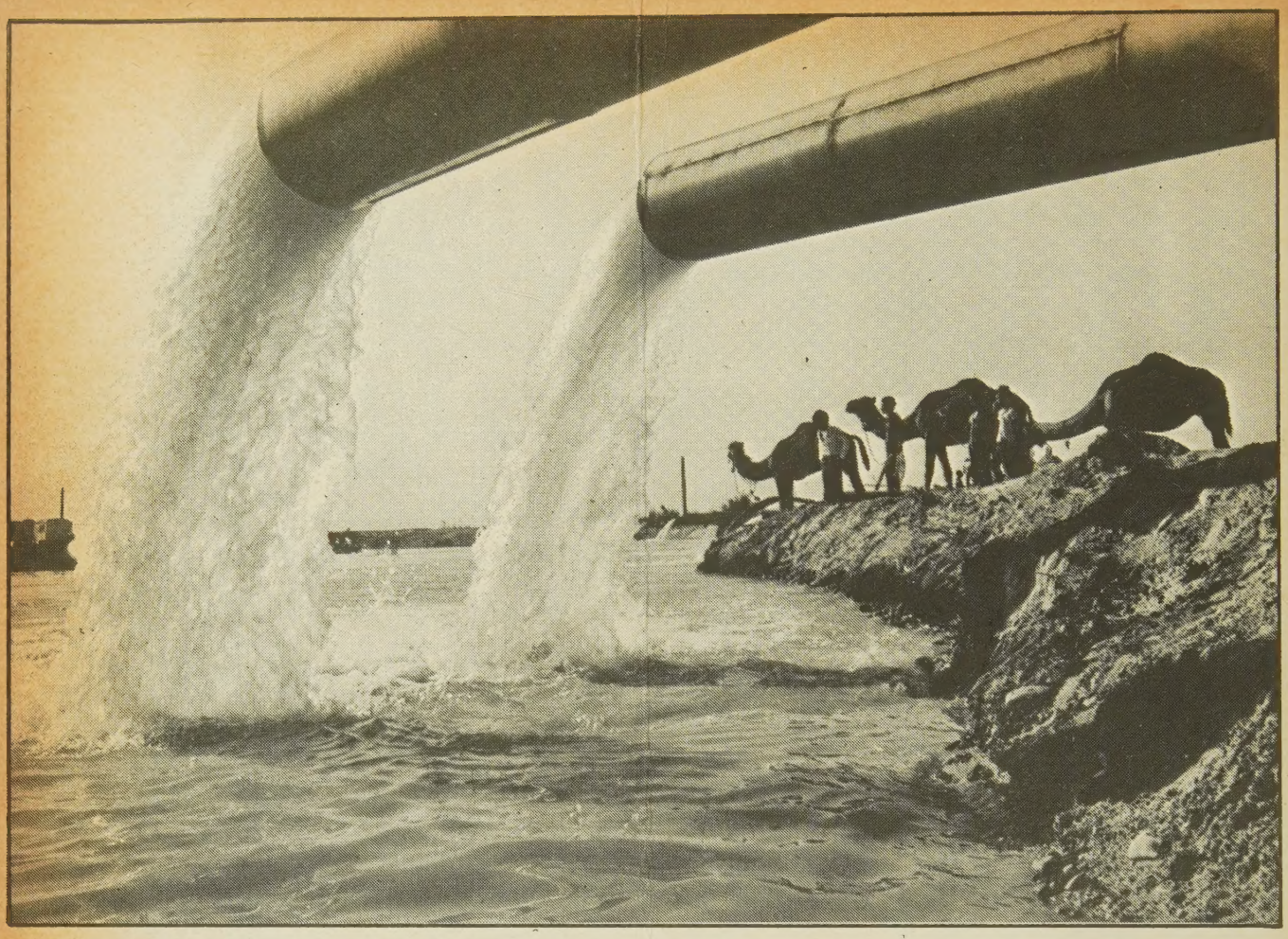
PHILIPPINES BEFORE THE ELECTIONS

THE CHANNEL TUNNEL



THE IRON TRIANGLE

WHO CALLS THE TUNE IN WASHINGTON AND HOW



These huge pipes carry the water of the Kara Kum Canal to distant pastures.

THE SOVIET UNION IN PICTURES

In the Kara Kum winters are kind to people and animals. The largest and southernmost desert of the Soviet Union rests from sweltering heat. Frosts are rare and do not interfere with plant growth. The sands absorb rain water and melted snow, and young shoots grow. Before long the camel's thorn turns green, sedge and meadow grass grow tall, and haloxylon groves burst into pink and white blossom.

By summer, however, the merciless sun has destroyed this short-lived beauty. The water reserves accumulated in January have run dry in a land where water and life are synonymous.

Over the past few years cosmonauts have observed increasing areas of green in the Kara Kum which do not disappear even in July when the air temperature rises to 40-45° C and humidity drops to 5 per cent. These are the pastures, melon fields, cotton plantations and orchards which draw water from the Kara Kum Canal.

Experts regard this canal, popularly known as "the river of life," as a vital factor in the development and distribution of productive forces in Turkmenia. The once lifeless desert now accounts for over half of that republic's cotton output and for its entire yield of fine-fibre varieties. Colourful settlements have sprung up, with Turkmenians living and working side by side with Russians, Ukrainians, Kazakhs, Uzbeks and Baluchis. Water is life, indeed. . . .

Is water always a blessing in the desert? As they reflected on this question, scientists from the Turkmenian Academy of Sciences recalled the local saying: "Too little water is bad, too much water is as bad." Overmoistening leads to salinization of the soil. What is now necessary is to organize irrigation in such a way as not to do any damage to the environment by squandering water resources.

Incidentally, fishing—an exotic occupation in that region—is now encouraged as a solution to another ecological problem which arose after the first section of the canal had been brought into service: the silting up of the canal bed due to the exuberant growth of weeds. At the suggestion of scientists herbivorous fish have been introduced into the canal, and grayling, fathead, carp and other freshwater fish are now bred on a commercial scale.

In the current five-year period the irrigation and reclamation of the Kara Kum Canal zone will be continued. By 1990 another 106,000 hectares will have been added to the one million hectare area reclaimed from the desert.

The Iolotan fish farm produces up to 700 tons of whitefish a year.

TASS photos

MAKE AN END OF WAR

The beginning of the year has been marked not only by hope. The threat of annihilation hanging over the world is acquiring new, unprecedented dimensions and compelling people to give serious thought to the future of civilization, to the preservation of life itself on Earth. As Mikhail Gorbachev has said, "we have all come to a point where we must stop to think, and on the basis of the realities, of a broad understanding of national interests, decide what is to be done in the world."

From day to day, with every new spiral in the process of world development, it is becoming increasingly obvious that there is only one way to prevent a universal catastrophe: to find the way out of the labyrinth of contradictions which by their in-built logic steadily impel the world towards the brink of a global conflict. One cannot but remember Herbert Wells, who many decades ago sought to bring home to all an idea that today is axiomatic: that unless we make an end of war, war will make an end of us!

It is highly appropriate at this juncture in history that the U.N. General Assembly decided last autumn to proclaim 1986 International Year of Peace. Its purpose is high-minded and vitally important—to concentrate the efforts of all members of the United Nations on promoting the ideals of peace and their achievement by all possible means. In other words, to give real-life embodiment to the basic principle of the United Nations—"to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war."

Our country's response to the call of the world community is a constructive one. Fully supporting it, the Political Bureau of the CPSU Central Committee has oriented all International Year of Peace events in the Soviet Union on promoting joint actions by the states and peoples to remove the war danger and to heighten the role of the U.N. as a collective instrument of security. The Soviet public not simply endorses the U.N. decision. The trade unions and other public organizations are doing everything to make this year a landmark in the anti-war struggle.

The U.N. call has found strong support the world over. It resounded forcefully at the meeting of non-governmental organizations just held in Geneva under the watchword "Together for Peace." The World Federation of Trade Unions is sponsoring a worldwide campaign for peace and jobs. Determination to do everything possible to make 1986 a year of a decisive turn in international life was voiced in the appeal issued by the representatives of the national peace committees of the socialist countries held in Sofia.

The principal task of the day is to translate the U.N. call into definite actions. Governments, like individuals, must be judged not by their words, however eloquent they might be, but by their deeds. The Soviet Union is ready to face the judgement of history, for that judgement is passed in conformity with this criterion.

In the four postwar decades our country has submitted to the United Nations more than 100 proposals aimed at the solution of general and specific problems of security and disarmament. Our readers will recall the resolutions adopted by the last U.N. General Assembly on the initiative of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. The U.S.S.R. also demonstrated its sincere desire to find avenues to peace by unilaterally renouncing first use of nuclear weapons, by its moratorium on the testing of these weapons, and by its readiness to enter into mutually acceptable compromises.

The programme advanced by Mikhail Gorbachev for the total elimination of mass destruction weapons by the year 2000 has laid a tangible groundwork for the success of the International Year of Peace. All sober-minded people see in it a proposal that would, if realized, enable mankind to enter the 21st century free of the burden of nuclear armaments. This thoroughly thought-out, realistic concept, which poses, in an altogether new way, the problem of guarantees of security in our explosive time, is the Soviet Union's weighty contribution to the solution of the question of questions of the day—the problem of war and peace.

The grim experience of the past shows that the fight against war must be waged before it has broken out. Those who accept the cynical view that the main lesson of history is that people learn nothing from it fail to see the wood for the trees. With the present world balance of strength "world war is not fatally inevitable," the draft of the new text of the CPSU Programme stresses. Mankind can be saved from catastrophe. The Soviet Communists, all Soviet people, see in this the historical mission of socialism.

FROM OUR MAILBAG

◆ Whenever I want a better understanding of contemporary international problems I turn to history. Now, again, reflecting on the agreement signed between the U.S.A. and Great Britain on the latter's participation in the "star wars" programme, and also on what is happening in the F.R.G., I reached for the book by Ivan Maisky, who was Soviet Ambassador to Britain in the 1930s and early 1940s. Analyzing the policy pursued by the Chamberlain government at that time I was struck by its resemblance to the policy of the present British government. Blinded by anti-communist and anti-Soviet feeling, the British Conservatives are still incapable of realizing the tremendous danger with which complicity in militarist plans is fraught.

Paul ERASMUS
Kuchelmis, G.D.R.

◆ It seems to me that among the terrorist acts that have shaken the world in the recent period a special place is occupied by the tragedy that occurred at the Valletta airport in Malta. It was there that the close interconnection between the two types of terrorism—individual and state—was most glaringly evident. Those who direct state terrorism operate through others and take the lives of innocent people to attain their own unsavoury ends. What is the purpose of these acts? Primarily to prevent the unity of the Arab world. The reaction of the United States in this respect is symptomatic. The dangerous commotion it has raised over what are truly tragic events is aimed at involving Libya in an armed conflict with Egypt and then attacking Libya in order to overthrow the anti-imperialist regime.

Alexei KURGANOV
Kolomna, Moscow Region, U.S.S.R.

◆ The Italian press has seized upon the arrival in Italy of the wife of Academician Sakharov to launch an anti-Soviet campaign and accuse the Soviet government of flouting human rights. But what is the media attitude to the political prisoners in our own country? As a man who spent 17 years in jail on a political charge let me say this: neither the Italian newspapers nor the government is at all interested in the fate of political prisoners. I was very ill in jail and after my release I underwent a kidney operation. Now I am an invalid and get a minimal pension which is not enough even to pay the rent. To feed my family I have to find some way of adding to my income. I am a foundryman by trade and have patented an invention. But it is getting harder and harder to find work and without a job one can die of starvation. And so I would like to advise the Italian government instead of criticizing others to take a closer look at what is happening at home.

Antonio FORGIONE
Lucera, Italy

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CONTENTS

Make an End of War (The Editor's Page) 1
"The Russians Have Made Their Move—and What a Move!" International Comment on CPSU General Secretary Gorbachev's Statement (reports from New York, Bonn, Paris, Brussels and Tokyo) 3
Panorama
V. Godyna—Asian Security: Justified Optimism. A. Usvatov—Mediterranean: Armada Off the Coast. Y. Kolosov—United Nations: Outer Space Committee's Main Task. Y. Bochkaryov—Lesotho: New Regime. N. Reshetnyak—South Africa: Sharpening Struggle. E. Plotnikov—Vientiane Meeting 7
E.A. Shevardnadze—Both Sides the Gainers (Press Conference in Tokyo) 11
N. Alexeyev—Philippines: Preelection Scene . . . 14
Notes ◆ Remarks 16
The Iron Triangle. Sinister Alliance of Military, Monopolies and Politicians 18
V. Tsoppi—The Emperor. Looking at Robert Hersant (Press and Politics) 24
N. Miroshnik—Cyprus: A Solution Does Exist . . . 26
L. Kharkov—Yugoslavia: Can Inflation Be Curbed! . . 27
V. Zhitomirsky—30-Minute Fixed Link 29
L. Yelin—Taking Up a Point 30
Postscript 31

What is the Military-Industrial Complex! How is this unofficial alliance of the military, monopolies and politicians working for war! Why does Washington identify its interests with the national interests of the U.S.! See pp. 18-23 for the answers.

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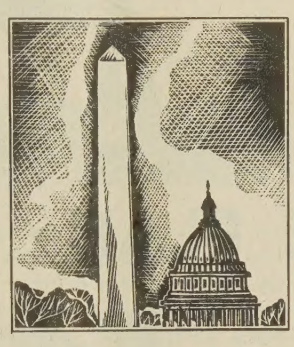
"THE RUSSIANS HAVE MADE THEIR MOVE—AND WHAT A MOVE!"

That was the comment of the F.R.G. weekly Der Spiegel, and it accurately reflects the international reaction to CPSU General Secretary Gorbachev's programme for ridding the world from nuclear weapons. Unlike the so-called Strategic Defence Initiative advanced by Washington, this concrete, realistic plan of action in a definite time framework charts the road following which humanity could enter the 21st century freed for all time of the "balance of terror" incubus. This is the keynote of the opinions voiced by most politicians, public leaders, military experts and the mass media in the various countries. True, there are also those who find the Soviet Union's bold initiatives not to their taste. These initiatives are not accepted by those who have a stake in the perpetuation of tension and who see in the arms buildup a source of lush profits. Nevertheless, the appeal of the Soviet proposals and the new elements contained in them have placed them in the focus of the attention of government leaders, political commentators and the general public.

Below New Times foreign correspondents report on how the Soviet leader's statement is appraised in the West.

TIME TO MAKE THE CHOICE



The spate of optimistic Soviet initiatives has proved so powerful as to elicit this apparently spontaneous reaction from President Reagan. He welcomed them and said they would be studied very carefully. It was evidently this that enabled New York Times news analyst James Reston to observe that this was perhaps the first time the American President had taken Soviet arms control proposals seriously, and this was the best news Washington had had for a long time. The initial reaction of the White House was indeed encouraging news for Americans since it is obvious that there are definite measures that Washington could take in response.

I put this to Professor Jonathan Sanders of the Averell Harriman Institute for Advanced Study of the Soviet Union.

It is very important to have an idea of the future, said Sanders. The Soviet leader's initiative provides such an opportunity. Although these ideas will be difficult to put into practice, prospects for complete elimination of nuclear weapons are good. And he singled out the proposals on medium-range weapons because they pave the way for a Soviet-American agreement.

Asked whether he believed in the sincerity of the Soviet leaders, the professor replied that it was an easy question to answer. He is, he said, a close watcher of Soviet policy. For someone who knows Soviet leaders as he does it is evident that they are sincere in their wish to avoid war. This is the underlying philosophy of the Gorbachev statement.

I spoke over the telephone to James Muller, one of the founders of the International Congress of Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War.

Speaking in his unhurried manner, the Boston physician said that an important aspect of the Soviet proposals was the extension of the unilateral Soviet moratorium on nuclear weapon tests. He went on to say that the organization does not believe it is "Soviet propaganda" and considers a moratorium necessary if the deadlock in the negotiations is to be broken. What is more, this is something the Soviet Union has already done.

Asked whether he felt optimistic about the future, Muller said that he was more optimistic today than several years ago. Solving the problem of the nuclear arms race is like ridding humanity of slavery. Gorbachev's proposals rise to the challenge of the nuclear age. He hoped that the U.S. idea of "star wars" would not prevent the realization of these proposals. It is very important to understand that "star wars" is not defence against nuclear weapons. The only way to make Americans secure against these weapons is to conclude sensible treaties and improve American-Soviet relations.

Soviet initiatives sound convincing to those who take into account the interests of all sides. This is admitted even by such champions of American policy as former CIA director William Colby. Listening to his speech, one could not help but be aware of the irrefutable logic of the new proposals: for it is practically impossible to realize the Strategic Defence Initiative before this century is out, as the U.S. Administration admits. If the proposed nuclear disarmament has been accomplished by then SDI will be meaningless.

After the President's initial spontaneous reaction the tone of comments from Washington changed. Defence Secretary Caspar Weinberger described as "very worrisome" the fact that, in proposing nuclear disarmament, the Soviet Union had in mind the abandoning of the creation of new types of space strike weapons. Larry Speakes, White House deputy press secretary, said: "We are suspicious of Soviet moratoriums on testing." The New York Times reflected the mood of some comment in recent days in its headline: "Peace Plan or Ploy?"

Some people are trying to see hidden intent where no one is trying to conceal anything. A time-tested method is to make it seem as if the proposals would only benefit the Soviet Union. The usually inquiring "independent" American press prefers not to mention that the billions of dollars spent on arms hit Americans just as hard. According to Peter Navarro, a Harvard University scholar, 25 per cent of taxes, almost 10 cents of every dollar earned by Americans, go on military spending.

Some people complain that the Soviet initiatives came as a surprise and that the proposals have been made publicly and not in the quiet of a negotiation room. Such statements reflect the wish of certain political circles to prevent Soviet initiatives from being widely known and stop the growth of the American peace movement in support of a nuclear test moratorium. James Muller told me that during lectures after the moratorium was introduced in August 1985 he asked his audiences about the initiative and found that no more than 5 per

cent of those present were aware of the Soviet step. According to Muller, the reason is simple—Soviet actions did not get enough coverage in the American media.

It looks as if some American leaders are tending to regard the results of the Geneva summit as the final achievement of Soviet-American relations and try to play down the fact that the spirit of Geneva calls for concrete action to reduce world tension.

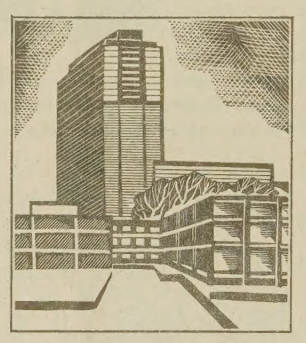
Characteristically, after a succession of "doubts" reminding us of Washington's favourite tactic of confusing matters with a thousand "what ifs?" a lull has settled in the press and statements by political leaders. Convinced that "counterarguments" do not stand up to criticism, American politicians have apparently got around to fulfilling the President's promise to study the Soviet proposals seriously, some in order to find common ground and others to set new obstacles in the way of future agreements.

It is not easy, of course, to adopt sensible norms of international relations in a political system whose military doctrine has for decades been geared to nuclear superiority and to serving the interests of the military-industrial complex. One key Administration official admitted that the new Gorbachev proposal "forces us to make hard choices that we haven't been willing to make so far." The time to make a choice has come. The new Soviet proposals are an acid test that will show who it is that only pays lip service to nuclear disarmament and who really wants it, who sincerely wishes humanity to enter the next century rid of the crushing burden of nuclear armaments.

A. ARKHIPOV
Our Own Correspondent

New York

REMARKABLE PLAN OF ACTION



The prominent functionary of the Social Democratic Party of Germany and disarmament expert of the SDP parliamentary group in the Bundestag Andreas von BÜLOW comments on the Soviet proposals in the following interview granted to our correspondent Alexander Tolpegin.

The statement by Mikhail Gorbachev contains a proposal for the total elimination of the medium-range missiles, both ballistic and cruise, of the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. in the European zone. How would you evaluate it?

First permit me to say a few words about the Gorbachev programme as such. I consider it a remarkable document. It is perhaps the first comprehensive plan of its kind drawn up in a definite time framework. I hope that this programme will help the forces that really are interested in disarmament to gain the upper hand.

As regards the elimination of the medium-range missiles of both sides, that is a very good proposal. As you know, the SDP has repeatedly declared for the removal of the "Eurostrategic" missiles. In our opinion it is also important to resolve the problem of tactical nuclear weapons.

The SDP also calls for a moratorium on the deployment of missiles. Such a moratorium would create more auspicious conditions for talks. For the continuing missile deployment raises additional obstacles to negotiations. Nevertheless, the dominant view in Washington is that the more weapons are accumulated, the more headway will be made at the negotiating table. Some in the Federal Republic also take that view. We Social Democrats, however, do not share that "philosophy."

Not long ago I said in the Bundestag that in the whole missile affair the Federal government has acted as a vassal who does not dare even to formulate its own viewpoint. The opportunities there were for arriving at a reasonable compromise were missed. We gained absolutely nothing by the siting of the Pershing 2s as far as security is concerned; on the contrary, our position became worse. Now we are faced with the hasty deployment of cruise missiles. Those who are deploying them are hardly thinking of removing them in the near future.

Besides, there is talk in the camp of the ruling coalition about some sort of European variant of the American Strategic Defence Initiative, in other words, about the creation of a European system of anti-missile defences.

The SDP came out against SDI immediately after President Reagan announced it. And we are proud of this. Needless to say, our critical view of the SDI extends also to the so-called "European defence initiative." If, as experts say, it is to all practical purposes impossible to create an absolutely reliable shield against strategic weapons, how can there be any protection against medium-range and tactical missiles, whose flight time is no more than a few minutes?

You say that the F.R.G. government is incapable of or unwilling to put forward its own disarmament initiatives. How in your opinion could the F.R.G. contribute to the strengthening of European security?

If the F.R.G. pursued a more independent policy it could of course contribute a great deal. We have already mentioned the question of a moratorium on the deployment of medium-range missiles. But we should not confine ourselves to a moratorium alone. Our own security interests dictate that on the territory of our country there should be no missiles targeted on the Soviet Union.

I also believe that we should restructure our own armed forces so as to impart to them a clearly defined defensive character. The point is that NATO strategy envisages the use of nuclear weapons already at the initial stage of hostilities and this makes us dependent on nuclear weapons. It is essential to get rid of that dependence.

SDP leaders speak about the need for a "second phase of détente" in Europe. Johannes Rau, the SDP candidate for Chancellor in the next elections, stated in his recent programme speech that the three components of the new phase of détente are elimination of the Eurostrategic missiles, development of economic ties, and promotion of cultural exchanges. Do you agree with him?

Of course, I do. In this connection I would like to stress that top priority belongs to questions relating to security. If we resolve them, it will be easier to promote economic ties. For there now are long lists of goods which it is prohibited to export to socialist countries on the pretext that they could be used for military purposes. Besides, the U.S. constantly insists on the widening and tightening of the restrictions. If a situation could be created in which military issues will not play the dominant role in East-West relations, the arguments now used to justify trade restrictions would also be cancelled out.

The very next day after the announcement of the new Soviet proposals

the Springer press mounted a campaign to discredit them. Die Welt, for instance, contended that the purpose of the programme advanced by the U.S.S.R. was to gain "total military superiority." How would you appraise this campaign?

It has nothing to do with serious discussion. It is primitive propaganda. The Springer press has long since shown that it is incapable of analyzing arguments put forward.

Bonn

"ANTI-NUCLEAR BOMBSHELL"

"Mikhail Gorbachev's anti-nuclear bombshell" was the streamer headline the Paris Libération gave its report about the latest Soviet initiatives. And that indeed describes the effect the statement of the CPSU General Secretary had in the editorial offices of French mass media. No one was hurt, of course, but the reactions varied widely.

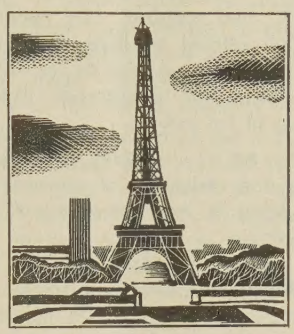
Some panicked, at a loss to know how to dismiss as "mere propaganda" the realistic, open and above-board proposals, which, moreover, took into account much that is advocated by Western countries. The ultra-Right Quotidien de Paris could not avoid outlining the substance of Mikhail Gorbachev's proposals and, which was altogether out of character, found in them a number of positive elements. The moderate state-owned TF 1 television company opted for a simpler expedient: in its main evening news cast it made no mention whatsoever of this important statement.

Other papers saw in the new proposals further evidence of the Soviet Union's sincere striving for disarmament which objectively accords with the common interest. The communist L'Humanité commented that after the new Soviet initiatives, Washington, and Paris too for that matter, cannot cling to their former stance on "star wars" and medium-range missiles, the termination of nuclear tests, nuclear disarmament and many other issues.

"The Soviet programme could become the main point of departure in the Geneva talks," the conservative Le Figaro said.

The initiative of the CPSU General Secretary, Le Monde commented, makes it possible to give added impetus to the talks on nuclear and space armaments, medium-range missiles in Europe, chemical weapons, and the reduction of armed forces and armaments in Central Europe.

Official Paris also reacted. Interest in the achievement of concrete results at the Soviet-American talks on disarmament was expressed in a Ministry for External Relations statement circulated by France-Presse. France, the statement said, will carefully study the new peace initiatives. Although it does not voice full and unconditional support of the



Soviet proposals (the emphasis is still placed on nuclear deterrence) it contains some positive elements. This applies, for instance, to France's view that space weapons must not be allowed to destabilize the foundations of peace.

The "arguments" of the opponents of the Soviet initiatives are simple enough. Firstly, it is claimed that if militarization of outer space is renounced, it might be impossible to arrive at any understandings at all. L'Humanité rightly observes that if the official contention is that SDI is a means of getting rid of nuclear weapons, why should the same result not be achieved by a simpler, cheaper and more realistic method beneficial to all peoples? This view is also expressed in commentaries carried by some bourgeois news media.

Secondly, the opponents of the Soviet proposals claim that today only nuclear weapons hold Soviet tanks and infantry in check. They say that as soon as these weapons are eliminated, the latter will pour into Western Europe. Soviet readers, of course, need not be told how fantastic and false is this propaganda thesis. Only those can believe in the "Soviet threat" myth who have been scared out of their wits by the misinformation they are exposed to day in and day out. But even the gullible should be reassured by the fact that Mikhail Gorbachev put forward a set of equally concrete and realistic measures aimed at reducing also **conventional** armaments in Europe and at building confidence among the countries of the continent.

"Those who oppose universal nuclear disarmament are speaking in the language of cold war," the well-known French writer and journalist Henri Alleg said when I asked him to comment on the warnings against the "nuclear disarming" of Europe in the face of the "Soviet threat." "The independence of the European countries cannot be ensured by a runaway arms race. Europe without nuclear weapons will be freer and safer."

"Security in Europe should be built not on deterrence but on a climate of trust, cooperation and détente," Jacques Le Dauphin, national secretary of the French Peace Movement, said: "The process of reducing nuclear armaments should not be confined only to the Soviet Union and the United States, at a certain stage it must be joined by France."

N. YERMAKOV
TASS Correspondent for New Times

Paris

WITH TWO TONGUES

The Belgian Le Soir headlined its report on the latest Soviet peace initiatives thus: "The Gorbachev plan: tremendous, if true." The country's political circles reacted less emotionally, but on the whole positively. An official spokesman of the Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs said that the Soviet proposals were interesting and would be carefully studied. The Christian People's Party, the leading component of the government coalition, welcomed them. At a meeting of the party's leadership it was noted that "the U.S.S.R. had taken a step in the right direction." "All efforts, including those of the Belgian government, should be directed at the speedy and sharp reduction of arms levels in

Europe and at the gradual destruction of all types of nuclear weapons," the CPP leadership stressed.

The leader of the parliamentary group of the Flemish Socialists, Louis Tobback,

called on his countrymen and all West Europeans to take a serious view of the Soviet proposals. In particular, he noted that while both Moscow and Washington talk about the need to do away with nuclear weapons, "the U.S. seeks to achieve this goal through a military programme [SDI—**V.B.**] fraught with unpredictable consequences whereas the only effective way to achieve this end is the reduction of nuclear arsenals."

NATO headquarters in Brussels also reacted to the Soviet initiatives, and rather promptly. The day after the Gorbachev statement was published, an official NATO spokesman read out to newsmen a brief communiqué stating that the North Atlantic bloc took "a favourable view of all proposals aimed at real reduction of armaments. Mr Gorbachev's proposals will be studied thoroughly and in detail."

However, in private conversations the Atlanticists say something altogether different, the Libre Belgique writes. They, the paper says, are unwilling to give up nuclear weapons. Diverse "theories" are advanced to substantiate this stance. One of these contends that nuclear deterrence has proved its effectiveness by ensuring humanity 40 years of peace. Why, then, experiment? Another "theory" holds that without nuclear weapons the likelihood of the outbreak of large-scale conventional wars would be increased. Still others maintain that the elimination of nuclear arsenals would not be to the advantage of the West, inasmuch as without them it would allegedly be weaker than the East.

The Libre Belgique observes that NATO has been prompted to "speak with two tongues" by necessity. Its initial official positive reaction to the Soviet proposals the paper attributes to a desire not to discredit itself in the eyes of the public.

If NATO is really interested in a genuine reduction of armaments it has to prove it. And prove it with actions.

V. BOIKOV

Brussels

UNIQUE CHANCE

How has the Soviet programme of total nuclear disarmament been received in Japan, the only country that has been subjected to nuclear bombing? This is discussed by MASASHI ISHIBASHI, Chairman of the Socialist Party, Japan's biggest opposition party, in the following interview to New Times correspondent Yuri Tavrovsky.

What is your opinion of the statement by CPSU General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev?

During a conversation some days ago with Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze I told him that I considered the statement to be of epochal significance. I am prepared to repeat that here. In recent years the arms race has reached its peak, and enough means of mass destruction have been piled up to destroy the entire world many times over. It is not by chance that people more and more often say: "It is only three minutes to a nuclear war." An unprecedented situation has developed when the technology created by human genius threatens to destroy the whole of mankind. Will the creator be able to control his creation or will it deprive him of the right to life? So far there is no simple answer to this question, the world is at a crossroads. The new Soviet proposal is based on faith in human reason, and precisely because of that I value it so highly.

What is the significance of the Soviet initiative for Japan?

If we recall all the talks on nuclear disarmament held so far, it cannot but be noted that they dealt with arms control rather than actual disarmament. And it seems to me that each of the countries in the nuclear club has been out to gain one or another advantage. Hence what was discussed was control over the quantity of the means of mass destruction and not their total elimination. The new Soviet programme providing for the total abolition of both strategic and tactical nuclear arsenals in the course of the next 15 years is truly a programme of disarmament and not only the outline of another means of arms control. For the Japanese, who have experienced the horrors of nuclear bombing, Mikhail Gorbachev's statement is a welcome development. The comprehensive concept of nuclear disarmament set forth in it should be studied in the most serious way, with a sense of responsibility, by the United States and the other nuclear powers. This is the call issued by Japan, the country of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

What do you think of the "star wars" concept which the U.S. proposes to give effect to also by the beginning of next century?

The U.S. President and his associates claim that SDI is a defensive concept. The same is being said also in Japan. With the appearance of the Soviet plan for destroying nuclear weapons throughout the world this and the other arguments advanced by the votaries of "star wars" have totally lost credibility. Defensive weapons are needed to counter offensive weapons. But if offensive armaments are done away with, why create a new type of defensive weaponry? Even if I had considered SDI to be a defensive expedient after reading Mikhail Gorbachev's statement I would cease to favour "star wars."

Do you see any connection between the programme for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons and Japan's three non-nuclear principles?

I do not know whether there is any direct connection between them, but I am perfectly certain that the struggle for the removal of the nuclear threat is entering a new stage and that it is more necessary than ever for Japan strictly to observe the three non-nuclear principles. Every country, Japan included, must ask itself what it can do to give effect to the first ever concrete programme for the elimination of mass destruction weapons. What step forward should we Japanese take? Perhaps create a nuclear-free zone, as the countries of Oceania have done? Or, after the example of New Zealand, draft and adopt a law prohibiting the entry into our ports of ships with nuclear weapons on board? Or perhaps Japan could say its own weighty word in favour of genuine disarmament? This must still be thought about.

There no doubt will be no few obstacles to the realization of the new Soviet proposals. What do you think of their chances of success?

All countries and peoples are fully aware today of the critical danger of nuclear war breaking out. Therefore it is not enough highly to evaluate the programme for the prevention of a nuclear conflict and the elimination of mass destruction weapons. It is necessary to mobilize world public opinion for a resolute struggle for the realization of this programme. Passivity is impermissible, inacceptable. It must not be left only to the U.S.S.R. and the U.S. to decide the fate of world civilization. The whole of humanity has the right to speak up and must exercise that right. If the world community will not miss the unique chance it has to save itself, the sun of hope will rise over the earth. As for myself, I believe in human reason and its ultimate triumph.

Tokyo

ASIAN SECURITY

JUSTIFIED OPTIMISM

Moscow, Pyongyang and Ulan Bator believe there are no insoluble political problems in Asia. But this view, expressed by the three socialist countries in the course of the recent official friendly visits to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Mongolian People's Republic by Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, does not amount to idealizing the situation on the Asian continent.

The situation in Asia is explosive and the growing aggressiveness of the U.S. is much in evidence. Militaristic tendencies are becoming increasingly pronounced in Japan. South Korea is being used as a nuclear springboard, and the formation of a new military-political alliance between Japan, South Korea and the U.S. is taking practical effect.

Despite this alarming state of affairs, Eduard Shevardnadze and his hosts in Pyongyang and Ulan Bator expressed confidence that things would change for the better—this optimism derives from their understanding of the directions to be taken to achieve collective security on the Asian continent. The constructive proposals made by the Soviet Union, the M.P.R., the D.P.R.K. and other socialist countries, as well as by non-aligned states, offer a reasonable alternative to continued buildup of tension. These proposals include the well-known principles of Bandung. The Soviet idea of a comprehensive approach to the issue of peace and security in Asia is indisputably productive. It was stressed during the visits that the Soviet Union's new comprehensive disarmament proposals would contribute substantially to making the idea a reality. The implementation of these proposals would radically alter the world situation.

The initiatives advanced by the M.P.R. and D.P.R.K. have lost none of their urgency. Mongolia is known to have suggested a convention on non-aggression and non-use of force in relations among Asian and Pacific countries. If such an international pledge were to be undertaken by the governments of countries that account for about two thirds of the population of the planet the situation not only in the region itself but also in the whole world would be much healthier. The same applies to the North Korean proposals which are entirely consonant with a comprehensive approach to the problem of peace and security in the Asian and Pacific region. These proposals provide for the immediate withdrawal of all U.S. troops and nuclear weapons from South Korea, and the establishment of a nuclear-free zone of peace in the Korean peninsula. Eduard Shevardnadze gave assurances of Soviet support for Pyongyang's proposal that the Confederal Democratic Republic Koryo be formed through dialogue and negotiation between the states concerned, that the armistice agreement in Korea be replaced by a peace treaty, and that a non-aggression pact be signed between North and South.

There are no insoluble problems in Asia. The problems of the continent can be dealt with, given the combined political will and readiness to engage in extensive dialogue which is the only means of solving them. **V. GODYNA**

MEDITERRANEAN

ARMADA OFF THE COAST

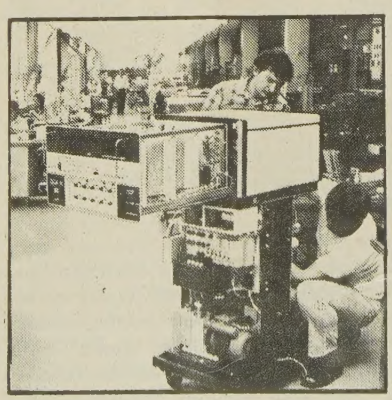
Washington is brandishing its fist at Libya more menacingly now than it has done for years. The Pentagon has dispatched almost the whole of its Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean to the shores of this sovereign Arab state. Reinforcements have even been brought in from the Indian Ocean by way of the Suez Canal.

As a result, 26 men-of-war are now lined up at the limit of Libya's territorial waters, including the Gulf of Sidra which cuts deep inland. The armada includes two aircraft carriers, the Coral Sea and the Saratoga, with 80

HUNGARY: 40 YEARS

The defeat of nazism in Hungary put an end to the anti-popular regime. Hungary was proclaimed a republic on February 1, 1946. Having won their national independence and freedom, the Hungarian people chose the socialist path of development despite fierce resistance from the forces of reaction both at home and abroad. In the 40 years of its existence the republic has carried out radical political, social and economic reforms and achieved major successes in the most diverse spheres.

Time has confirmed the effectiveness of Hungary's cooperation with the Soviet Union and other socialist countries which now account for over 53 per cent of its foreign trade.



The Soviet Union alone accounts for nearly a third, and is its biggest trade partner. It is the main supplier of mineral fuels, vital raw materials and many items of industrial plant, and is a major consumer of Hungary's industrial and agricultural products. The Long-Term Programme for the Development of Economic, Scientific and Technical Cooperation Between the U.S.S.R. and Hungary for the period of up to the year 2000 has been adopted recently. The way for our joint advance into the 21st century is already being paved today.

Photo: A new instrument being assembled at a plant of the Medicor amalgamation, Hungary. Medicor medical equipment is exported to many countries.

TASS photo

and 90 combat planes respectively (20 of the latest fighter-bombers apiece among them) poised for action on their decks. All these planes take off intermittently for what are officially referred to as "air manoeuvres."

The official explanation for what is happening will deceive no one: the United States is plainly trying to intimidate Libya which has been accused of involvement in the acts of terrorism committed late last December simultaneously at Rome and Vienna airports.

Over a month has passed since then and Washington has still not produced any evidence to support these charges. For this reason even the NATO allies are unwilling to join their senior partner in the trade and economic boycott it imposed on Libya at the beginning of January. From this point of view the tour of nine West European capitals by John Whitehead, Deputy Secretary of State, ended in failure. The allies were not keen to join the American embargo (except Norway which has its own oil and does practically no trade with Libya, and which had previously voiced token support for the U.S.).

Washington, however, is continuing its malicious anti-Libyan campaign. In a New York Times interview Secretary of State Shultz reserved the "right" for the U.S. to take military action against those it suspects of "supporting international terrorism." Having intimated that the necessary measures were being prepared, Shultz said he felt increasingly resolved to use them at the right moment.

Is the American armada, concentrated off the shores of Libya, waiting for such a moment? The Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi described the militaristic American antics off Libya as an aggressive provocation, a threat not only to his country but to peace and security in the Mediterranean as a whole, and emphasized that the Libyan people were determined to defend the sovereignty and territorial integrity of their country.

It is clear that as part of its "new globalism" Washington thinks nothing of sabre rattling and trying to dictate terms to sovereign states. Under the pretext of "fighting international terrorism," the U.S. itself engages in state terrorism with regard to nations that do not subscribe to its policy. This is a dangerous line.

A. USVATOV

UNITED NATIONS

OUTER SPACE COMMITTEE'S MAIN TASK

The need to prevent an arms race in outer space was confirmed by two resolutions adopted at the 40th session of the U.N. General Assembly. One of them was prepared by the First Committee and entitled "Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space."

The other resolution, "International Cooperation in the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space," was drafted by the Special Political Committee of the General Assembly and adopted unanimously, without voting, by delegates including those of the U.S. Nevertheless, Washington is now trying to interpret the resolution in its own way on the grounds that the problems of disarmament are beyond the scope of the committee.

The resolution reviewed the work done by the U.N. Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space in 1985 and set its objectives for 1986. At the same time it voiced profound concern about the spread of the arms race to outer space. The resolution urgently called on all states, particularly those with high space research potential, to contribute actively to the prevention of an arms race in outer space as a vital precondition for international cooperation in the peaceful exploration and uses of outer space.

The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space was asked to consider as a matter of priority, at its session next June, ways and means of preserving outer space for peaceful purposes. In fulfilling this request, the committee will have to discuss the documents concerning the ways and means of preserving outer space for peaceful purposes distributed at the 40th session of the General Assembly.

The U.S.S.R. is known to have submitted to the session the document entitled "Main Lines and Principles of International Cooperation in the Peaceful Exploitation of Outer Space Under Conditions of Its Non-Militarization." The document outlines realistic ways of keeping outer space peaceful. The Soviet proposals were distributed at the session as an official document of the Special Political Committee. This means they are to go before the U.N. Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

The U.S. delegates have taken exception to this. They claim that the U.N. Disarmament Conference is the only multilateral forum authorized to discuss such matters. This viewpoint came in for well-founded criticism. The Chinese delegation at the Special Political Committee pointed out that the spread of the arms race to outer space presents a serious threat, and that the U.N. and its Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space—the main international agencies responsible for the coordination of space activities—should, therefore, take vigorous action to reverse negative trends in this field.

It would be opportune to recall here that 20 years ago the committee drew up the treaty now in force obliging the states that were party to it to refrain from putting into orbit round the Earth any objects carrying nuclear weapons or any other kinds of weapons of mass destruction, installing such weapons on celestial bodies, or stationing them in outer space in any other way. In 1979 the same committee drew up, with U.S. participation, the Agreement Governing the Activities of States on the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies which forbids the use of force on the Moon. So why, then, cannot the committee draw up today similar international agreements on the non-deployment of any weapons in outer space and the non-use of force in, and from, space with regard to the Earth?

The obvious lack of logic in the U.S. position did not pass unnoticed. Criticizing it, the Czechoslovak delegate stressed that exploring the ways and means of keeping outer space weapon-free was the main task of the committee.

This view is in keeping with the U.S.S.R.'s new initiative urging the advance to a qualitatively new stage of multilateral cooperation in the peaceful exploitation of outer space under

conditions of its non-militarization, to the point of establishing a world space organization. The U.N. Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space is the most appropriate forum for the further discussion of this initiative.

The committee itself and its scientific and technical subcommittee have only limited scope for promoting international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space because they only meet for two-week sessions once a year. For this reason the discussion of the problems associated with the changeover to cooperation on a broader scale remains a most pressing task.

As Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze told the 40th U.N. General Assembly, "having written the first pages of its space history, mankind now has two courses open to it: either to have outer space serve the purpose of improving life on earth, or to make it a source of a new and mortal danger." The future of civilization largely depends on which course mankind takes. The Soviet Union urgently demands that mankind take the first.

Y. KOLOSOV, L.L.D.

International NGO Conference

"Never before has the need to limit and eventually stop the arms race been as urgent as today," says the message of the U.N. Secretary-General to the International Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). This is the first truly worldwide event held by NGOs this year and it effectively opens the U.N.'s International Year of Peace programme. The conference, held in Geneva under the slogan "Together for Peace," brought together about 450 delegates from 36 countries representing 186 international, political, public, religious, women's and youth organizations.

Dialogue, not confrontation—this was the keynote of the speeches. Delegates noted the outstanding significance of the new disarmament programme proposed by CPSU General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev. The recent Soviet initiatives containing concrete proposals to halt the arms race and eliminate nuclear weapons, said Margarita Papandreou, prominent champion of women's equality, could provide a unique opportunity for moving on to a new kind of interstate relations based on understanding and confidence.

A numerous group of conference participants met members of the Soviet delegation at the Soviet-U.S. nuclear and space arms talks.

In the present situation, says an appeal adopted by the conference, concrete action is needed because improvement of nuclear weapons poses the gravest danger to peace and the very survival of mankind.

The conference proposed a campaign—at national and international level—in support of the Gorbachev proposals on the complete destruction of nuclear weapons as an urgent public duty that would contribute to the implementation of the Soviet-American accords.

V. GALIN

LESOTHO

NEW REGIME

On January 20 a government coup was staged in Lesotho, a tiny country (30,000 square kilometres) with a population of about one and a half million, bounded on all sides by South African territory. In 1966 the British protectorate of Basutoland was proclaimed the independent Kingdom of Lesotho. Leabua Jonathan, its prime minister for almost 20 years, was overthrown by the military led by general Justin Lekhanye, commander of the 1,500-strong paramilitary force (Lesotho has no regular army). The country is now being ruled by a military council headed by Justin Lekhanye. King Moshesh II of Lesotho, who under the toppled regime performed merely ceremonial functions, has been vested with legislative and executive powers by the new military leaders.

Commenting on the causes of the coup, news agencies stress the fact that Lesotho has been under crude pressure from the racist rulers of South Africa. On January 1 they imposed a total economic blockade on the kingdom and stopped all trains carrying fuel, foodstuffs, medical supplies and other goods. Pretoria declared that it would not lift the blockade until Lesotho extradited African National Congress anti-apartheid guerrillas allegedly hiding on its territory and signed a "security agreement" with South Africa.

In presenting what amounts to an ultimatum, Pretoria hoped to destabilize the political situation in Lesotho and weaken a government which had in recent years pursued an independent foreign policy.

The economic blockade created grave difficulties, notably food shortages, aggravated the situation in the kingdom, and made a change of government inevitable. Immediately after the coup Pretoria relaxed the blockade but said it would not lift it completely until its demands were met. After talks between a Lesotho delegation and the South African government it was announced in Maseru that refugees from South Africa, described by Pretoria as ANC guerrillas, would not be extradited to Pretoria. Some of them would be evacuated to countries that agreed to receive them. General Lekhanye made it clear in his message to the U.N. that Lesotho is having to send the refugees out of the country under direct pressure from Pretoria. "The situation is deteriorating to a point where the safety and security and well-being of Lesotho as a sovereign state are now in jeopardy," the message says. On the question of foreign policy the new leaders of Lesotho have declared that the kingdom will remain a member of the Organization of African Unity and the non-aligned movement. They intend to honour all of Lesotho's international and bilateral agreements and preserve previously established diplomatic relations with all states.

Another fact worth noting is that the Jonathan government, finding itself in difficulty because of the South African blockade, had asked Washington and

London to bring pressure to bear on South Africa. In reply it was told that the conflict should be settled peacefully, at the negotiating table, in other words, that Lesotho should put itself at the mercy of the racists.

This is further proof that South Africa is pursuing its policy of brigandage in the south of Africa with direct support from the U.S. and Britain.

Y. BOCHKARYOV

SOUTH AFRICA

SHARPENING STRUGGLE

The African National Congress of South Africa (ANC) has proclaimed 1986 as the year of its military arm Umkhonto we Sizwe (The Spear of the Nation). Thus, while continuing with its political struggle on a massive scale, the ANC now emphasizes armed opposition to the crisis-ridden racist regime. The crisis is marked by economic difficulties, growing unemployment amongst both Africans and whites, and the widespread struggle for the abolition of the apartheid regime.

In a bid to suppress the mass movement, the racist authorities have imposed a state of emergency in a number of districts and moved troops and police into many towns and villages. They are using hired killers to make short work of opponents to the apartheid regime. An average of three murders and 60 arrests occur in the country daily, UPI reports.

In this situation, the ANC national executive committee stressed in a message to mark the 74th anniversary of the organization, the strategic goal of the ANC should be to develop the revolutionary situation. "We have to build up our forces," reads the message, "to create a united mass liberation army capable of striking heavy blows at the enemy to destroy apartheid and establish the power of the people."

Today Umkhonto we Sizwe fighters are conducting operations against regular troops and military-strategic installations in South Africa. Increasingly frequently government troops encounter armed resistance. A France-Presse correspondent reports that "there have been more grenade and machine-gun attacks on local officials and police in black townships." According to the South African Institute for Strategic Studies, the ANC carried out three times more military operations in 1985 than in the previous year.

The ANC leadership categorically denies racist and Western propaganda allegations that it has military bases in neighbouring African countries from which to attack the racist regime. "We reaffirm," ANC president Oliver Tambo declared, "that there are no ANC military bases in neighbouring states. The racist military have been using this as a pretext to make raids against independent countries in the region for six years now."

Pretoria wants to present the ANC as terrorists who have no support amongst the masses. The facts speak otherwise. Africans march in demonstrations and funeral processions carrying the banners and singing the anthem of the ANC. White clergyman Nico Smith, who has come to live with Africans in the Mamelodi township near Pretoria, is convinced that attempts to "take measures" against ANC sympathizers are doomed to failure. Even a government-sponsored inquiry has admitted that about 80 per cent of Africans support the ANC and believe that it will fight to the end, upholding the interests of all Africans in South Africa.

N. RESHETNYAK

VIENTIANE MEETING

The 12th conference of the foreign ministers of Laos, Vietnam and Kampuchea was held in Vientiane on January 23-24 (these meetings are held once every six months). The ministers discussed the situation in the world in general, and Southeast Asia in particular, and formulated the positions of the three countries on topical issues of world politics.

Note was taken of the turn towards dialogue and peaceful coexistence that had occurred last year, primarily as a result of the Soviet-American summit in Geneva, and strong support was voiced for the programme of complete and total elimination of all means of mass annihilation, advanced in General Secretary Gorbachev's statement.

There have been positive changes in Southeast Asia as well. The peoples of Indo-China have scored important successes in building a new life, their unity has been strengthened and the cooperation of Laos, Vietnam and Kampuchea with the Soviet Union and other socialist countries in all spheres has broadened. A new stage in the dialogue between the two groups of Southeast Asian countries was ushered in last year by the meetings of the foreign ministers of Vietnam and Indonesia, the latter representing the ASEAN states.

The changes for the better in Southeast Asia and primarily the progress made by the people of Kampuchea in the past seven years have enabled Kampuchea and Vietnam to reaffirm their intention to complete by 1990 the withdrawal from Kampuchea of the Vietnamese volunteer forces stationed there. Stressing that the country's domestic problems must be settled by the Kampuchean people themselves, the government of the republic announced its readiness, for the sake of national reconciliation, to begin talks with individual representatives or with organizations of the Khmer opposition (conditional on the removal of the Pol Pot clique). Laos, Kampuchea and Vietnam declared for the settlement of outstanding questions in their relations with Thailand on the basis of the principles of peaceful coexistence.

The ministers pointed out that the political settlement of the so-called "Kampuchean question" must precede the establishment of a zone of peace and stability in Southeast Asia on the basis of the Bandung principles and mutually acceptable proposals advanced by the countries of Indo-China and ASEAN.

The conference emphasized that the peoples of the three Indo-China countries attach great importance to their long-standing friendship with the Chinese people and hope that it will be speedily restored, for this would be an important factor of peace and stability in Southeast Asia. Laos and Kampuchea declared their full support for Vietnam's efforts towards the resumption of negotiations between Vietnam and China without preliminary conditions with a view to normalizing relations.

The participants in the meeting in Vientiane discussed the results of the foreign ministers' conference of non-aligned countries in Luanda, gave a high appraisal of these results and pledged to do everything possible to make the coming conferences of the non-aligned movement in Delhi and Harare successful.

E. PLOTNIKOV

BOTH SIDES THE GAINERS

Transcript of Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze's Press Conference at the Japanese Press Club in Tokyo, January 19

Shevardnadze. Ladies and gentlemen, I wish to thank the leadership of the Japanese Press Club and personally Mr Arai for their kind invitation to meet you.

I must frankly say that, this being Sunday, I expected a smaller attendance at this, my first press conference on the talks that have been held. But it has worked the other way around. I was reluctant to spoil your rest day, but I believe that newsmen do not relax, not only on Sundays, but also when they sleep. After all, when journalists and diplomats take a day off, public opinion is left to its own devices. And that is hardly desirable.

I have been told that Japanese newsmen have "complained" that the Soviet side has been "regulating" the information on the talks we have had here.

I think the reproach is not quite justified. First, there were press releases and public pronouncements. Sufficient material was made available for obtaining an idea of the nature of the talks and the atmosphere in which they were held. Second, as a rule, talks proceed in such a way as to make it difficult to say precisely where the discussion of one or another issue is completed, especially if it is a question of the world situation and problems relating to security.

Besides, we made a point of not hurrying with conclusions before hearing out the other side and putting forward our own arguments.

Now, after three rounds of talks and unofficial conversations with Foreign Minister Shintaro Abe and an interesting and meaningful meeting with Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone, some conclusions can be drawn.

Above all the resumption of political dialogue, which both sides firmly agreed to continue, is a positive fact in itself.

It may be said that we now have a much better idea of each other's positions, moreover, on a wide range of issues. In this respect we took a step forward. The important thing is that the desire to meet each other half-way was mutual and sincere.

As you know, a message from CPSU General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev was conveyed to Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone inviting him to visit the Soviet Union. Mikhail Gorbachev was similarly invited to visit your splendid country. This means that political contacts will be continued at the highest level.

The positions of the sides were brought closer together on a number of international problems, primarily regional issues and also some bilateral questions.

A joint communiqué, the content of which I would say is good, substantive and businesslike, was agreed upon.

We regard the documents signed as being of a positive character—the agreement on trade and payments in 1986-90 and the convention providing for exemption from dual taxation. We also prolonged the term of the exchange of letters on cultural ties and agreed to speed up talks on the conclusion of an agreement on cultural ties so as to be able to sign it when Mr Abe comes to Moscow.

An important positive aspect of our work was the reaching of agreement in principle to activate cooperation in the sphere of science and technology.

Mention must also be made of the fact that the talks proceeded in a correct, respectful manner, although they at times dealt with rather acute issues. I must also tell you in confidence that there were some heated arguments.

We proceeded from the principles of equality, equal rights, and equal concern on both sides for the strengthening of cooperation. We also spoke about improvement of our relations not being allowed to be detrimental to third countries. We went on record that the Soviet Union and Japan are not rivals when it is a matter of economic and commercial intercourse, for by virtue of their economic potentials our countries are in a sense mutually complementary.

The talks are now over and, naturally, commentaries on them have begun to appear. On the whole, the picture they give is quite objective. Nevertheless, they reveal a certain desire to establish which side was the gainer. Conjectures are built around the so-called "territorial question." In my youth I dabbled a little in journalism and intuitively foresee that you are going to ask me about that question.

True enough, it was raised by the Japanese side. And we duly replied. Our stand is well known. Not long ago it was expounded, among other things, to Japanese representatives by our Party and government leaders.

We stressed that if we really want to improve our relations, it is essential not to lose sight of the existing realities.

As for who was the gainer, I believe that both sides gained by the talks. The only losers are those who sought to complicate them.

We accomplished big, useful job of work. We now see the future of our relations in a more optimistic light, despite the complex problems that still exist. It seems to me that differences and disagreements will remain. But this should not be dramatized. We must work to improve relations between our countries step by step.

Relations between states are like relations inside a large family. They have to live together, at times in concord and sometimes in discord lasting years,

if not centuries. And experience shows that discord does little good, it only spoils things.

It is also a good thing that we have seriously begun to seek accord. On behalf of the Soviet side I can say that on the whole we are satisfied with the results of our talks in Tokyo.

I am also glad that the range of our contacts here was wide. My meeting with Masashi Ishibashi, Chairman of the Socialist Party, was most rewarding. I also had a comradely, serious conversation with the Chairman of the Japanese Communist Party, Kenji Miyamoto, and other leaders of that party. And today I have two more meetings scheduled—with the mayors of Nagasaki and Hiroshima.

We have met official spokesmen, businessmen, workers and engineers, cultural workers, and teachers. But my wife had the most interesting meeting of all, with Japanese children.

I had a memorable meeting with Governor Suzuki of Tokyo. We would like to thank him for his hospitality.

Our visits to the Nissan plant and the Sony scientific and technological exhibition were extremely interesting. I promised that on my foreign trips I would "boost" the output of these firms. We were greatly impressed by a performance we saw at the Kabuki theatre. It was pleasant to witness how the Japanese cherish the cultural legacy of the past, and how skilfully they organize modern production.

To return to the talks, I should like to stress that in my opinion it is important to sense whether we managed to get a rapport, whether both sides are prepared to build the edifice of their relations on the foundation laid now.

I would answer this in the affirmative. Incidentally, it seems to me that the press intuitively gave a correct appraisal of the spirit and trend of our talks. This is a confirmation of your professional skill, your knowledge of the existing realities.

I have acquainted myself with your appraisals during our visit and wish to say that on the whole your coverage has been objective and interesting. I know one must not spoil one's relations with the press.

I should like to dwell in greater detail on a question which occupied a central place in the meeting with Prime Minister Nakasone and the talks with Foreign Minister Abe.

I am referring to the initiatives put forward by CPSU General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev, initiatives comprehensive in scale and truly historic in significance which open a real avenue to the elimination of nuclear and other mass destruction weapons by the end of the century. I found it noteworthy that the leaders of Japanese political parties I talked with yesterday described these initiatives as epochal.

I believe that you are well acquainted with the statement made by Gorbachev, and hence shall not go into it in detail. I only wish to stress that our proposals cover the entire range of issues relating to the limitation and elimination of armaments, primarily the nuclear and chemical.

The Soviet Union's comprehensive programme directed at removing the threat of nuclear destruction by the end of the century has evoked great interest the world over and met with wide support on the part of both governments and the public.

It must be noted, however, that attempts are already being made to erode the substance of our proposals, to implant scepticism in people's minds, doubts as to the feasibility of the objective set.

There are some who, while complimenting the Soviet initiative, are trying to sidetrack its discussion far off course. To begin with it is approached not as the integral, all-embracing programme it is. It may be said that the idea is to fragment it into isolated elements.

The day before yesterday we visited an auto plant and saw the conveyor in operation. In relation to our initiative it might be said that certain quarters would like to reverse the conveyor in order to dismantle the up-to-date working model of disarmament already assembled.

A different "technology" is also used. An argument is started as to who was the first and it is hinted that the Soviet proposals have been borrowed from the American side.

If this were so, it would seem that there should be no hitches in working out a programme for the abolition of nuclear and chemical weapons and carrying out other arms limitation measures.

Again we hear allegations that the Soviet Union is once more laying down preliminary conditions. It is insisting, you see, on the U.S. dropping the "star wars" programme. For those bent on embarking on an arms race in the most dangerous area of all—in outer space—our stand is truly an impediment. But it is absurd to talk about doing away with nuclear weapons while developing new space strike weapons, which in no sense are less dangerous than the nuclear and are envisaged as an addition to the already existing mass destruction weapons potentials. Once we decide to disarm, armaments must be eliminated and not carried over from Earth to outer space.

A few words about verification.

Mikhail Gorbachev's statement makes it clear that we are for combining all forms of verification—through national technical means, international mechanisms, on-the-spot inspections, and access to relevant research laboratories.

We propose working out clear-cut procedures that would fully guarantee the destruction of nuclear and chemical weapons and preclude the possibility of their reappearance.

The impression is that whatever forms of verification we agree to, the other side promptly thinks up new ones in order to evade any real disarmament measures.

The proposals put forward by Mikhail Gorbachev offer a real alternative to the increasingly dangerous arms race which must be checked, and open the prospect of a more secure world for all. To this end the Soviet Union is ready for wide cooperation with all who proceed from positions of reason, good will, and awareness of their responsibility for ensuring humanity a future without wars and without armaments.

In this connection I should like to recall what the well-known Latin American writer Gabriel Garcia Marquez said about decisions taken with a sense of responsibility today—being operative also in the 21st century. It seems to me that the statement by Mikhail Gorbachev has precisely this significance: it anticipates how and in what situation we shall enter the next century.

Assembled in this hall are representatives of the press of different countries. I would like each of you to construct a mental picture of what an uncontrolled arms race and the further sophistication of the means of destruction would spell for your countries.

Think of the situation in which we all would find ourselves in the year 2000, if we are destined to see it at all.

Compare your forecast with the situation that could come into being if the programme for a radical break with military rivalry advanced by Gorbachev is realized.

In the final analysis we shall all have to answer to coming generations.

Thank you.

I am now ready to answer your questions.

Yomiuri. My question relates to the territorial problem. The joint communiqué has not yet been made public and we do not know its contents, nor do we know how the territorial question

which interests us most, is reflected in it. From the standpoint of the Japanese people, this question is the most important, but the Soviet side maintains that either it has been resolved or does not figure at all in our relations. I should therefore like to take advantage of your visit to Japan to ask you once again what historical and legal justification is there for the four northern islands being Soviet territory?

Shevardnadze. You said that the joint communiqué has not yet been made public. You have not long to wait, for it will be published tonight. Judging by the Japanese press, Foreign Minister Abe has told newsmen that the Japanese side raised the territorial question at the talks and that the Soviet side stated its position. This is a problem on which we did not reach understanding. As regards the legal and historical grounds on which the Soviet position is based, here nothing has changed. There are also other problems in our relations which are rather complicated and difficult. But despite the differences, we agreed with the leadership of your country to search for ways of deepening mutual understanding and moving step by step towards normalization of relations.

Soviet television. How do things stand as regards the projected meeting between Mikhail Gorbachev and the U.S. President, and can it be understood that by his statement Comrade Gorbachev is making the problems of nuclear and chemical weapons the central issue at this meeting?

Shevardnadze. In Geneva agreement in principle was reached on continuing the Soviet-American summit meetings. The idea is that Mikhail Gorbachev will visit the U.S. and meet the President and the U.S. President will visit the Soviet Union next year. The dates have not yet been fixed. Arrangements are now being made and the dates will be announced later. We are seriously preparing for this meeting. Our most important argument is the statement by Comrade Gorbachev. Needless to say, security and disarmament will hold the central place in the Soviet leader's meeting with the U.S. President. This is how we visualize the meeting.

If you consider my answer insufficiently exhaustive, we can talk about it again in Moscow.

Asahi. Concerning the political dialogue between Japan and the Soviet Union. Japan was once visited by Mr Mikoyan. That visit evoked much interest and there was actually talk in Japan about a "Mikoyan boom." I believe that if the CPSU General Secretary paid a visit to our country, there could be a "Gorbachev boom." In my opinion top-level exchanges of visits is an effective way of improving Japanese-Soviet relations. My first question: is there a possibility that the CPSU General Secretary might visit Japan this year, before Prime Minister Nakasone visits the Soviet Union? A second question: if the summit does take place, can we Japanese expect, as a result of such a meeting, more pleasant news in regard to the territorial question than we heard from you today?

Shevardnadze. A long question, but the answer will be brief. Strictly speaking I already answered it in my statement. Mr Nakasone has been invited to visit the Soviet Union. He in his turn has invited General Secretary Gorbachev to visit Japan. Let us not anticipate events. I believe that the top leaders will decide for themselves where they will meet. I do not know exactly what Gorbachev's time schedule is, but one thing I know for sure: he is very eager to see Japan and meet the Japanese people. As regards the angle from which the "territorial problem" will be examined by the top leaders of the two countries, I would not care to go into that now. That would be in a way interference in their internal affairs.

At the meeting between Mikhail Gorbachev and Masashi Ishibashi, the Chairman of the Japanese Socialist Party, the "territorial question" was raised by the Japanese side. I assume that you know of the answer given by the Soviet side.

Mainichi. What does the Soviet Union expect of economic cooperation with Japan? In other words, what part does economic cooperation with Japan play in the development of Soviet economy?

Shevardnadze. Most likely the Soviet Union expects exactly what Japan does from the development of bilateral economic cooperation. I have already said in my statement that we are equally interested in developing economic cooperation. And if the question is put in such a way as to suggest, say, that the Soviet Union is more interested in cooperation than Japan or vice versa, we shall not be able to achieve a serious expansion of that cooperation. We are not competitors, our economic and trade structures are mutually complementary. In this sense it is clear that both sides must be interested in developing their trade and economic ties, and this is what makes such ties useful.

So as not to return to this question let me say this. Japan can exist without the Soviet Union and the Soviet Union, too, will not perish if we do not have economic cooperation with Japan. But it is better to live together, to help each other solve the complex problems of a socio-economic and scientific and technical nature.

Associated Press. My question is connected with the Soviet Union's attitude to SDI. President Reagan has often said that at present this is a matter only of research into the defensive possibilities and the object is not to create an offensive weapon. The United States is, therefore, continuing research relating to defence in outer space. It is not against the U.S.S.R. conducting similar research. Why, then, should the Soviet side object to similar research in the United States?

Shevardnadze. No one prevents you from engaging in research. Mikhail Gorbachev has made this quite plain. Laboratory research is going on both in the U.S.A. and in the U.S.S.R. If you create space strike weapons we shall do the same, we shall not be found wanting. But we are proposing an altogether different concept—to do away with all that hinders us now from delivering people of the fear of nuclear catastrophe, to destroy nuclear weapons, to destroy chemical weapons. What need would there be in that case for a so-called "defence system"? Against what? Against whom? What is the need of it? Why spend trillions and trillions of dollars on creating that system?

The alternative we propose is this: let us cooperate in the peaceful exploration of outer space, in the peaceful exploration of Mars, and so on, for there are plenty of planets and galaxies. This is a tremendous field for exploration. And so it is quite a different programme the Soviet Union is proposing. The logic is not on your side.

I cannot reply to this question calmly because the life of humanity on Earth is at stake. SDI is not as innocuous a programme as it is depicted. It is a military programme, a programme for the militarization of outer space. Let me remind you of the philosophy propounded by U.S. President Johnson: he who dominates outer space will dominate the Earth as well. That is the secret of the "star wars" concept.

It is even sometimes said in the U.S. that the Soviet Union is ahead of the United States in scientific research, in particular in the creation of space weapons. If that is so, the American side should be even more interested in prohibiting space weaponry. A far better course would be to keep the sky and outer space clear for peaceful cooperation.

The chairman then declared the press conference closed and thanked the Soviet Foreign Minister. ■

Presidential elections take place on February 7

PREELECTION SCENE

It is a long time since an election campaign in the Philippines has aroused such political passions. For the first time in 15 years the Filipinos will be electing both a president and a vice-president. Between 1972 and 1981, when President Ferdinand Marcos imposed a state of emergency to combat rampant terrorism on the part of semi-feudal landowners opposed to his socio-economic reforms, parliament had been dissolved, political parties outlawed, and the post of vice-president abolished. For the first time the highest posts in the republic will be contested by the ruling New Society Movement (KBL) and the bloc of candidates from leading bourgeois opposition groupings.

Raising the political temperature is the personality of the opposition presidential candidate. She is 52-year-old Corazon Aquino, widow of former senator Benigno Aquino. Marcos's most serious rival, Aquino was murdered under circumstances that remain unclear at Manila airport in August 1983 when he returned home after three years of emigration in the U.S. That made him something of a martyr.

Also adding fuel to the campaign is the fact that the February 7 elections will be held 18 months before Marcos's six-year term runs out. According to a New York Times correspondent reporting from Manila, this is the first time since Marcos moved into the presidential palace in 1965 that he has got himself into such a corner.

What has made the president take this political risk?

Some of his aides believe that the president decided to hold an early election to clear himself of accusations of being "autocratic," and reply to recent mounting criticism of his handling of the economic and "military" situation (the growing armed activity of rebels who call themselves the New People's Army). In recent months he has been under heavy and concentrated pressure from Washington. In an interview with Time magazine he lent credence to this reading of his motives by saying: "I was so irritated by all this talk on the impeachment question, on the failure of the insurgency programme, I got fed up with all this harassment."

Political Calculation

But more probably the president's decision was not taken on impulse, it involved political calculation. He hoped that the opposition would have no time to regroup and form a united front. That hope has only been partly justified, if at all. Salvador P. Laurel, leader of the main bourgeois opposition party, the United Nationalist Democratic Organization (UNIDO), who was an aspirant for the post of president for many years, withdrew his candidacy at the last moment in favour of Corazon Aquino, who had previously belonged to a different opposition group. Such a compromise between the forces opposing the president was unthinkable before, and this led to their defeat in virtually all the elections since the state of emergency was lifted. True, Aquino and Laurel have agreed to run on the same ticket, she for president and he for vice-president, but only after prolonged and bitter arguments within hours of the deadline for the registration of candidates running out. But they did arrive at an agreement. Political observers see the Aquino-Laurel tandem as a success of the trend towards unity among the bourgeois opposition in the Philippines, which has always been torn apart by the personal political ambitions of its members. However, the challengers of the incumbent president have yet to come up with a constructive programme.

Experts in Philippine public opinion believe that Ferdinand Marcos's strongest base is amongst the rural population who support him because in his 20 years in power he has carried out a series of social and economic programmes which have gone some way towards ensuring rural development. Electrification, irrigation, road- and school-building schemes have been under way. Meanwhile, however, city dwellers have not particularly benefited from these programmes. And they are much more vulnerable to the continuing rise in prices, unemployment and general worsening of the economic situation. In 1985 the country's economy registered "negative growth" and the gross national product actually decreased. Meanwhile external debts topped the $26 billion mark. All this means that in the coming election the biggest challenge to Ferdinand Marcos will be from the cities.

In order to clear himself of accusations of "dictatorial ways" and of ignoring public opinion, Ferdinand Marcos, an astute politician, has chosen as his running mate for vice-president 75-year-old Arturo Tolentino, one of the harshest critics of his policy. Tolentino was Minister of Foreign Affairs until March 1985, when he retired over differences with the president on constitutional matters. Although a member of the KBL, the ex-minister is very popular with the opposition. He was the only candidate in the ruling KBL to defeat a UNIDO opponent in the May 1984 parliamentary elections in the Greater Manila constituency.

Blackmail and Interference

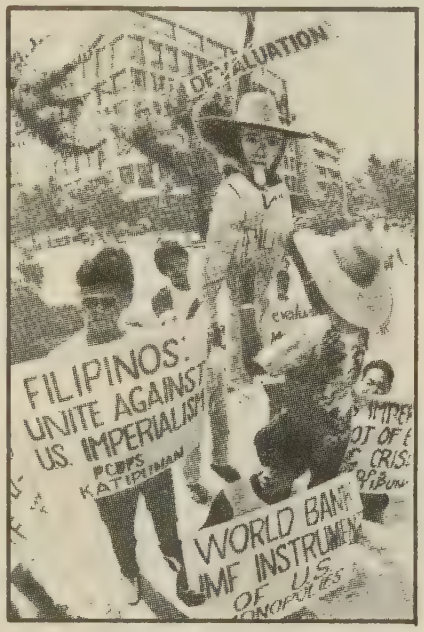
Washington, for its part, has in recent years made a show of supporting the opposition's demands for "democratization" and "liberalization" of political and economic life in the Philippines. At issue above all is the restriction of Marcos's presidential powers which—leaving their other features aside—make him less vulnerable to direct American pressure. Washington would like to see changes in the political, economic and military leadership of the Philippines. It is also vexed by the foreign policy course which, since the 1970s, has been less and less exclusively oriented towards the U.S. That period saw the Philippines establish diplomatic relations with the majority of the socialist countries, thus diversifying Manila's foreign political and economic ties.

For several years Marcos managed, through clever footwork, to confine himself to relatively insignificant concessions to Washington. But in recent months he has found himself on the receiving end of the whole panoply of American pressure tactics, from economic blackmail over credits to direct aid to opposition groupings, from "counsel" from influential private individuals to "consultations" by high-ranking state officials of the U.S. State, Defence, and Treasury departments, from thinly veiled threats issued by personal emissaries from the American President to "special operations" carried out by the CIA regional residency which is based in the Philippines. The U.S. seeks to make the ruler of the Philippines more amenable or, failing that, to replace him with someone more pliable from among the opposition.

The last part of the scenario has now had to be dropped as the opposition has failed to produce a figure of suitable stature. American embassy officials in Manila have made it clear to correspondents that the U.S. would like to see Marcos remain head of state but with greatly curtailed powers and stronger opposition in the civil service and military establishment.

This "double-track" approach by the U.S. is prompted by fears about the low effectiveness of President Marcos's anti-insurgency measures in the military, social and economic fields. Proceeding on the assumption that further worsening of the economic situation tends to increase the numbers and activities of the New People's Army, the American policy makers believe that they alone can provide the Philippine government with the right economic and military solutions. And if the government fails to follow these recipes, then the country, they aver, may go the way of Iran or Nicaragua and the U.S. will lose its huge military bases and financial investments. This prospect is a headache for American champions of "political democratization" in the Philippines, "economic recovery," "eradication of abuses by the local military," and so on.

In this light, suggestions made from time to time in the U.S. Congress to the effect that it would be easier for the U.S. to move its bases from the Philippines to Guam, or the Marianas or other Micronesian islands is no more than a ploy to scare the Philippine government which has renewed its demand for increased rent on the lease of the bases. Assistant U.S. Secretary of Defence Richard Armitage, who went on a fact-finding trip to the Philippines, told the U.S. Congress at the end of last year that the bases on the Philippine archipelago were extremely important for the U.S. and could not be moved elsewhere.



Anti-American demonstrations are quite common in the Philippines.

Photo from the Far Eastern Economic Review (Hongkong)

In its global strategy, the Pentagon is clinging to its major overseas bases, Clark Field air base and the Subic Bay naval facility situated in the Philippines at the juncture of the Pacific and Indian oceans. Clark Field is the base for the 374th Tactical Air Wing and three fighter squadrons of the 13th Air Army. The base has a landing strip and all the necessary equipment to service strategic bombers. Subic Bay is the base of the 7th Fleet which patrols vast areas of the Pacific and the Indian oceans. The significance of Subic Bay for Washington's aggressive and imperial ambitions in the Asian Pacific region would be difficult to overestimate.

Breaking All Bounds

A convincing victory by any presidential candidate is apparently not in the political and strategic interests of the U.S. Administration. Washington would like whoever wins the election to emerge from it as weak as possible, which would make him more docile. In that case the problem of insurgency would be resolved in the way Washington thinks necessary.

It is no wonder that American interference in the election campaign has in recent weeks broken all bounds. A high-ranking adviser to Ferdinand Marcos recently said that the statements and actions of Stephen Bosworth, U.S. Ambassador to the Philippines, are reminiscent of the behaviour of a governor-general in an American colony and that the constant demands of Washington's representative for a "fair and free" election are insulting to the people and government of the Philippines. In early December the U.S. Ambassador had to be snubbed by the president himself after he had unceremoniously demanded clarification of a reshuffle in the general staff of the armed forces. On January 16 the Manila newspaper Bulletin Today reported that the next session of the National Assembly would consider the question of the desirability of Bosworth's continued stay in the Philippines. Because brazen interference does not only occur through diplomatic channels, the president has had to order an inquiry into all cases of interference by the CIA.

The actions of the American representatives as well as the U.S. Administration and Congress are deeply insulting to the national dignity of the Filipinos, irrespective of their party affiliation. Whoever wins the coming election, the reputation of the United States in its continued claim to be a selfless and sincere friend of the Philippines is sure to suffer.

N. ALEXEYEV

MORE ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS

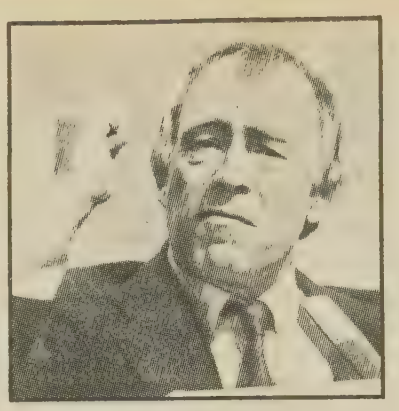
The two things happened almost simultaneously. A few kilometres from Munich, the capital of Bavaria, the body of a hanged Turkish worker was found. The investigation showed that the crime had been committed by neonazis.

Just when the police were studying the clues left by the criminals, Heiner Geissler, General Secretary of the Christian Democratic Union, delivered a programme speech on human rights in Bitburg, the town where not long ago the F.R.G. and U.S. leaders had paid homage to the nazi dead.

It would have been useless, of course, to expect Geissler to voice indignation about the crime near Munich or about violations of the rights of the Gastarbeiter in the F.R.G. Nor did he mention the 2.3 million F.R.G. workers who have been deprived of the right to work, or demand punishment for those who, despite the Constitution, keep watch on F.R.G. citizens and persecute them for their political convictions.

Unwilling to see what goes on under his very nose, Geissler waxed eloquent on the subject of human rights in the U.S.S.R. and the other socialist countries. "Unemployment benefits in the F.R.G.," the CDU General Secretary said, "are higher than the wages paid to workers in the Soviet Union." In the first place, Herr Geissler ought to know that at best no more than one third of the F.R.G.'s jobless receive unemployment benefits. And secondly, Geissler has simply no idea how little of those benefits are left to live on after all the deductions for rent, water, gas and electricity.

Geissler also likes to hold forth about higher things. War and peace, for instance. But, again from the standpoint of "rights." Peace, he says, is a "political condition which exists only if human rights are observed." And further: democracy will perish because of the "laziness and cowardice of democrats, their slavish fear of the communist threat." Geissler's point is not quite clear? He elucidates. The cause of international tension, he says, is not the arms race, but the "incompatibility of freedom and dictatorship." What he



The most vicious hatemonger.
Photo from Der Spiegel (F.R.G.)

was saying, whether he intended it or not, was approximately the following: people in the socialist countries must be enabled to exercise their rights (as Geissler understands them, of course), even if this requires blasting them and everyone else on the planet out of existence.

"Peace is not the most precious thing," he said in Bitburg. That has a familiar ring, has it not? It looks indeed as if Geissler was trying to be more papal than the pope. For even the Washington he so deeply reveres has ceased to make such statements.

A few days later Geissler again harped on his favourite theme, human rights. This time he spoke of the fascist dictatorship in Chile for which, believe it or not, he blames Salvador Allende.

Is it any wonder that the CDU General Secretary has earned the dubious reputation of being the "most vicious hatemonger since Goebbels."

N. ALEXANDROV

IF H PRES

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One is th type Israeli terrorist and the Zionist citizen of b ed States.

The other of the Sou Churches, N

MAFIA IN THE UNIONS

Not long ago the White House declared another war on organized crime in the United States. President Reagan actually published a magazine article on the subject. As it happened the appearance of the article coincided with the publication of a report by a commission on combating organized crime. The report dealt with the activities of the mafia in the trade unions. Many observers see a symbolic significance in the coincidence: The point is that one of the principal "heroes" of the report is none other than Jackie Presser, president of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Chauffeurs, Warehousemen and Helpers of America.

Last summer legal proceedings were instituted in Cleveland against Presser on charges of corruption but were quickly dropped, when it turned out that the trade union boss was an undercover FBI informer. But if Presser's ties with the FBI were secret, his connection with the mafia was and still is common knowledge. Presser leads a wonderful life, American newsmen say. The gangsters call him their man, and he himself has on more than one occasion spoken of his close ties with the Administration. In the opinion of the above commission, contacts men like Presser have with the Administration undermine the public's faith in the sincerity of the efforts to combat the mafia.

One cannot but agree with this. The more so that by a similar concatenation of circumstances the trial of Raymond Donovan, former Labour Secretary, began the other day. He is charged with serious crimes, including ties with the mafia. When he was appointed to the post many said this was tantamount to putting the "fox among the chickens." But the White House paid no heed to the warning.

Under Donovan, Presser and their ilk the mafia gained even fuller control of the unions. The gangster syndicates, the commission's report says, squander the unions' social welfare funds. Thus, A. Glick of the Las Vegas mafia pocketed the pension funds of the Presser-led union. Six million dollars of the money went to invest in two casinos.

V. DMITRIYEV

OUT DRA

On Januar white robe steps of the and announc for governo Lee, the Knights of head of on Klux Klan g an end to Mexico and the school said, needed so that ever study separa viction that of learning t

The "drag behind the lightened ag racist views of achieving test among that black p times less whites, as w by a number of Columbi champions udice and

Bishop Desmond Tutu, a black citizen of South Africa.

Kahane, whose political credo is "Down with the Arabs!", went to the United States to collect funds for the expulsion of all Arabs from Israel. And also to tell the American public that there exists considerable disagreement between the Zionists and the Western democracy. Even the American brand, which is nearest to Kahane's heart. The United States, Kahane thinks, ought to wipe the Libyan capital Tripoli off the face of the earth. In President Reagan's place he would issue such an order. But the rabbi-cum-terrorist hopes that in time American democracy will become more akin to Israeli Zionism. And then of course it will wipe Libya and other Arab states off the face of the earth. And men like Bishop Tutu will not be allowed to set foot in America.

Tutu, who fights apartheid in South Africa, went to the U.S. to collect funds for the victims of racism. And to draw the attention of the American public to the violations of human rights by the Pretoria authorities. The Bishop, who is often likened to Martin Luther King, attended the celebration held in Atlanta to mark the anniversary of King's birth. The widow of the American civil rights fighter awarded the Martin Luther King prize to the South African champion of the rights of the black majority.

In one of his public speeches the Bishop condemned Israel for expelling the Palestinians from their homeland. This is what enraged the "mad rabbi."

Tutu is a bad man, Kahane fumed. And it was outrageous that a black like him should be allowed publicly to insult Israel. He referred to him as "that black" and called him a "racist and anti-Semite."

Tutu did not reply to the epithets hurled at him. Nor did he reply last year to the offensive remarks addressed to him by the ultra-Right American preacher the Rev. Jerry Falwell. It would have been beneath his dignity to do so. **E. LVOV**

journal New Republic published a long "scholarly" article on the subject of the "intellectual inferiority" of blacks. After all, that can hardly be called primitive racism, can it?

Besides, is it always necessary to dress up in KKK robes to keep the blacks in line? A simple police uniform will do just as well to talk to "niggers" and "chicanos" in the language of the Colt; or else you can order an air raid on some unruly ghetto, a new departure tried out last year in Philadelphia.

And so the Texan "dragon" is not likely to become governor of the state. The "100 per cent Americans" he is appealing to are more inclined to entrust power to some respectable politician who will not yield to the blacks and will mouth the usual platitudes about rights and freedoms in the spirit of the times. Did the present Administration not strike at the racial minorities by slashing appropriations for social needs while proclaiming civil rights champion Martin Luther King a national hero? This is not the old-time stock-in-trade, but political rhetoric, not racism but the "neoconservative race policy." **V. KULISTIKOV**

"I would forbid them to wear that getup! It only interferes with drawing a bead on blacks."

Cartoon by N. Shcherbakov

THE CIA BUYS A LADA

After a prolonged search, the CIA has produced fresh "proof" of Nicaragua's close ties with the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front in El Salvador—the old stuff has evidently been discarded as totally unconvincing. A film shot a year and a half ago showed what were supposed to be weapons being transferred from a Nicaraguan fishing boat to a launch belonging to the Salvadoran rebels. But though the film was chock-full of such "evidence" no one was convinced. And so fresh "proof" had to be dug up.

And so it was. How this was done is described this time by the Süddeutsche Zeitung. A Lada, a car of Soviet make, was stuffed with ammunition, explosives, dollars and a book of "secret codes," plus a few envelopes with Moscow and Havana postmarks (to leave no room whatever for doubt). All this was wrapped up in Nicaraguan newspapers and the Lada was sent on its way through Honduras to El Salvador. Here, according to the scenario, after an unfortunate blowout, the car was detained by the Salvadoran security police. The latter, performing the role assigned them, demonstrated the above-mentioned ammunition, the envelopes and the "codes" to newsmen. And, of course, the car so cleverly selected for the secret trip.

"The result of the operation," the Süddeutsche Zeitung writes, "leads one to suspect that the whole thing is the clumsy work of the special services." The "crafty" device with the Lada and the other compromising attributes, the paper comments, was timed for the new discussion in U.S. Congress of appropriations for the contras. The envelopes with the Moscow postmarks evidently made an indelible impression on the legislators. What about importing more Lada cars to cover up other such elegant CIA operations!

V. YERSHOV.

THE IRON TRIANGLE

SINISTER ALLIANCE OF MILITARY, MONOPOLIES AND POLITICIANS

The arms race has become a root cause of world tension, mistrust and hostility between states. It must be halted now, before this wasteful and dangerous military rivalry gets out of control. The senseless pursuit of military superiority and breakthroughs in military technology is undermining strategic stability which can, however, at present be preserved by joint efforts of both sides. Hence the crucial importance of the Soviet programme, put forward by Mikhail Gorbachev in his statement, to deliver the world from nuclear weapons in stages by the 21st century.

There exist real prerequisites for Soviet-American cooperation in the sphere of disarmament—prerequisites which no differences between the U.S.S.R. and the U.S. can outweigh. Universal vulnerability and interdependence make survival a common cause.

The Soviet Union has repeatedly demonstrated its readiness to match its practice to the imperatives of the nuclear age. President Reagan has also assured the world recently that his Administration is similarly inclined. At the same time it is apparent that any steps towards disarmament meet with fierce resistance on the part of the powerful transatlantic forces that have stage-managed American politics for many years and have now rallied round the banner of the military-industrial complex. The draft of the new text of the CPSU Programme says: "Having coalesced into the military-industrial complex, the arms manufacturing monopolies, the generals, the state bureaucracy, the ideological apparatus and the militarized science milieu have become the most fervent executors and organizers of the policy of adventurism and aggression. The sinister alliance of death merchants and imperialist state power is the mainstay of extreme reaction and a constant source of the growing danger of war. . . ."

What is the military-industrial complex? What are its inner political workings? What levers does it use to influence decision-making in Washington?

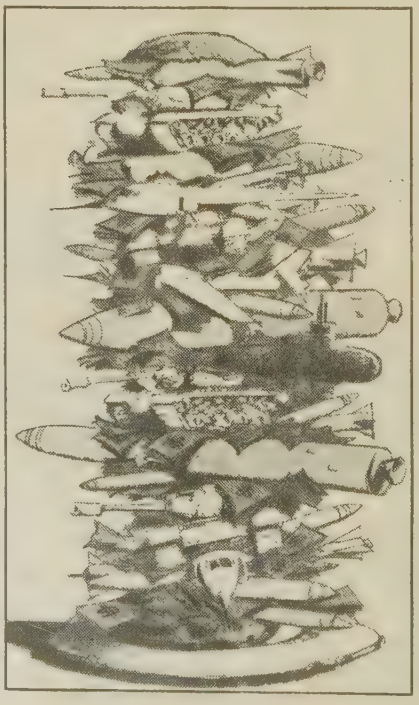
GENERATOR OF TENSION

SERGEI FEDORENKO, Cand. Sc. (Hist.)

The term "military-industrial complex" (MIC) comes from American political vocabulary and stands for a specific feature of contemporary life in the imperialist countries, in particular the U.S., namely, an unofficial, mutually profitable alliance between government military departments and Big Business amalgamations specializing in arms manufacture.

The traditional emphasis on force in U.S. foreign policy and the obsession of the American ruling elite with the idea of emerging victorious in an unrestrained arms race have put the military in control of enormous material and manpower resources. At the same time, a relatively stable nucleus has taken shape of those industrial corporations which regularly draw substantial profits from the federal war budget.

The bond between the Pentagon and military Big Business is a function of their common interests. In the case of military-industrial monopolies these interests are quite concrete. Intense preparations for war and a steady rise in government allocations for arms production guarantee them high dividends and make them securely impervious to the fluctuations of the market, inflation and instability characteristic of the capitalist economy.



Weinberger Hamburger.

Big Business arms manufacturers are better off today than ever as they glut themselves on orders lavished on them with the blessings of the Reagan Administration. The Pentagon's rapidly swelling budget has been something of a sacred cow immune from legislators' encroachments. As a result, the Administration's programme for the country's rearming has led to an almost 60 per cent rise in military spending (in fixed prices) over the period of 1980-86. The Pentagon has had a total of $1.4 trillion over the past five years. Nearly half this sum will eventually find its way to the arms manufacturing corporations.

The Pentagon's Sinecures

The American elite's reliance on power politics automatically guarantees influence and prestige to the Pentagon and suits its officials. The Pentagon, which enjoys special privileges and gets the lion's share of the federal budget, offers its top- and middle-ranking civilian officials a slot in the political elite, high social status and the opportunity to make promising contacts in the business world.

The Pentagon guarantees its permanent civilian personnel lifetime employment and high pensions.

As far as the Pentagon's army officers of various levels and ranks are concerned, its continuing special position means a successful career as well as financial security, free education and medical

care, a high pension, and a lucrative post-retirement job in an arms manufacturing company, and so on.

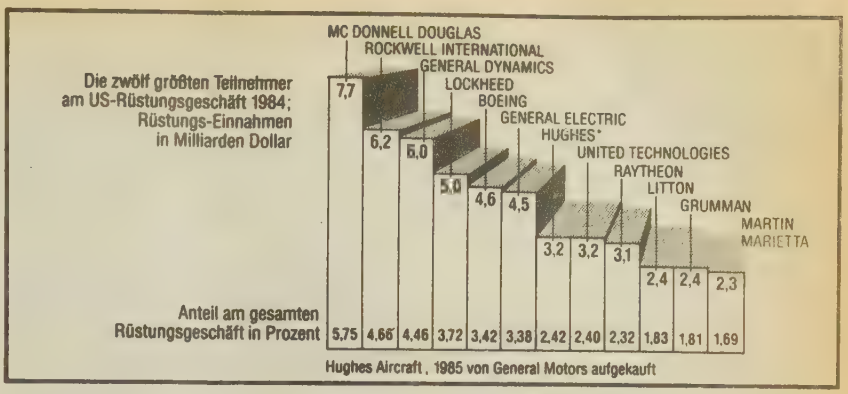
All this determines the political orientation of various groupings functioning under the MIC's aegis. These groupings comprise Pentagon-employed scientists, trade unions at the industrial plants fulfilling the Pentagon's orders and, finally, the legislators who represent the states and districts in which the munitions industry is largely located. In the aggregate, they exert a marked influence on the formation of U.S. foreign policy strategy and offer its makers every support. It is those representatives of various factions of the military-industrial complex who inevitably insist on the power-politics approach to contemporary international relations. It was they who stimulated and capitalized on the Rightward shift in American political life and did their utmost to prevent the ratification of the SALT-2 treaty and discredit the very idea of an American-Soviet dialogue on arms limitation and reduction.

The MIC has an effect both on the mechanism of U.S. foreign policy and on the political and psychological atmosphere in which it functions.

The military-industrial community furthers its interests through the agency of its direct representatives in the key government departments engaged in foreign policy decision-making. The MIC has its interests zealously looked after in the corridors of power by, for the most part, the Pentagon. The very structure of the U.S. foreign policy mechanism enables the MIC to shape it in accordance with its own interests.

This structure includes, amongst other components, the National Security Council (NSC), comprising a ramified system of committees, problem and regional interdepartmental groups with the Pentagon's top-ranking civilian and military officials widely represented. The Defence Department also holds positions of strength in the permanent body of the Council charged with running its various subdivisions.

Under the current Administration, the Pentagon exerts the greatest ever influence on U.S. policy-making. The heads of the Pentagon notorious for their extreme Right-wing views—in particular Defence Secretary Caspar Weinberger, and his aides Richard Perle and Fred Ikle—have come to the fore in making crucial foreign policy decisions. During the Administration's first term of office, their bellicose philosophy remained the leitmotif of U.S. foreign policy strategy. In Richard Perle's opinion, for instance, any arms control agreements with the Soviet Union are immoral and harmful because they restrict the possibilities of using armed force as an instrument of U.S. policy. The U.S., he believes, should overtly impose an arms race on the Soviet Union, and win it.



The United States' 12 biggest arms manufacturing companies, their shares in the American arms industry output, per cent (bottom row of figures) and their profits in 1984 (billion dollars).

Lobbyists and Propagandists

The military-industrial community is not only a part of the U.S. foreign policy planning mechanism. It exerts an influence on this mechanism from the outside as well, through the so-called military-industrial lobby. Congress, which controls the federal budget, is under permanent pressure from the lobbyists. The fact that legislators stand regularly for reelection and are consequently hypersensitive to changes in the political situation in their respective states and districts, makes them extremely susceptible to conditioning by lobbyists.

The rate of profit of the arms manufacturing monopolies is 20-30 per cent higher, on the average, than that of civilian industries.

The instruments and methods of such conditioning vary from bribery and blackmail to perfectly legal forms of financial and political stimulation which include officially sanctioned money donations and vote control at the next elections. Numerous pressure groups have much to show for their efforts. The number of officially registered lobbyists runs today into thousands and continues to grow. The scale of their activities is manifest, for instance, in numerous scandals of bribery, malfeasance and abuse of office involving U.S. Congressmen and other legislators and sensationalized from time to time by the American press.

The Pentagon itself is also doing a great deal of pressure work on the Capitol. Every time a draft military budget comes before Congress, practically all the top civilian and military Pentagon officials join in the lobbying. The means of persuasion they use are nothing new: the lobbyists appeal to the legislators' "Americanism" and anti-Sovietism.

It is noteworthy that military propagandists are trying to condition the whole of American society, and all its social and political institutions. The media are taking an active part in this campaign. Their propaganda is based on ideas hatched by the MIC-fostered American think-tanks and institutes which work out the theoretical foundations of power politics. The result is the continued maintenance of the socio-psychological atmosphere and the politico-ideological medium which gave birth to the military-industrial complex and made it a powerful force in the American social system.

An Endless Race?

Yet, the powerful elements that make up the military-industrial complex are not a kind of demoniacal force dominating the U.S. political scene. After all, U.S. policy is no more than a concentrated expression of the interests of its ruling class and monopoly capital. In these interests, those of the MIC are always weightily represented, but do not necessarily predominate. The munitions industry accounts for about 7 per cent of America's gross national product today. This figure is not an index of the real weight and influence carried by the MIC in the political life of the country. Neither does it provide grounds for

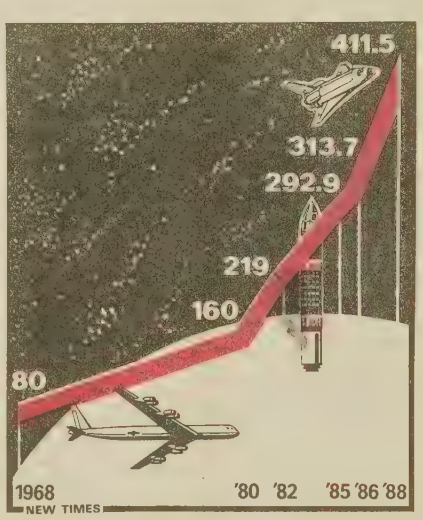
ascribing exclusively to the MIC those dangerous developments which spill over into the international sphere and, one way or another, contaminate and deform international relations.

Moreover, the MIC itself consists of a multitude of factions and groupings. Though all of them have a single ideological platform, their practical interests often clash, and covert or overt conflicts ensue. At one time such a conflict occurred within the Pentagon in connection with the Safeguard ABM project which was made the responsibility of the U.S. Army but evoked objections from the U.S. Air Force. SDI has brought about a similar situation today.

There are deep-seated differences on the question of the expediency of getting strategic rivalry under control. The craving for superiority and profitable orders enters into conflict with the military planning departments' natural wish to guarantee that predictability in the strategic situation which only a strategic arms limitation treaty can bring. It is not by chance that the Joint Chiefs of Staff, which tops the list of these departments, was by and large in favour of the SALT-1 and SALT-2 treaties.

Another important problem worth mentioning in this connection is the budget deficit which stems from enormous military spending and is a headache for U.S. Congress and business circles. The hard line taken by legislators is already compelling the Pentagon and its

GROWTH OF U.S. MILITARY SPENDING
(billions of dollars)



partners in the business world to ask for further funding with greater circumspection. The Gramm-Rudman amendment on the "automatic" reduction of annual budget deficits means that the military-industrial community is in for hard times.

Nevertheless, the military-industrial complex remains the chief political force directly interested in keeping the militarist orientation of U.S. foreign policy, which explains why representatives of the military-industrial community are so enthusiastic about SDI. The reason, however, lies not only, and not so much, in the fact that SDI promises new and fabulous profits to military-industrial concerns. After all, even the directors of the "star wars" programme cannot vouch for its technical feasibility.

On a more practical plane, the military-industrial complex expects this programme to become—given sufficient momentum—a battering ram capable of doing away with the surviving elements of the international arms limitation regime and breaking open the way to uncontrolled and irreversible military rivalry. Perle is quoted as saying in this connection that SDI is really intended not to protect U.S. territory from a nuclear threat, but to protect its foreign policy from the threat of arms control.

Washington cannot accept the fact that America's superiority is a thing of the past and that there exists no purely technical solution to the security problem. The current craze for SDI is another example of "escaping into technology" in an attempt to win the arms race. That such attempts are hopeless and extremely dangerous is evidenced

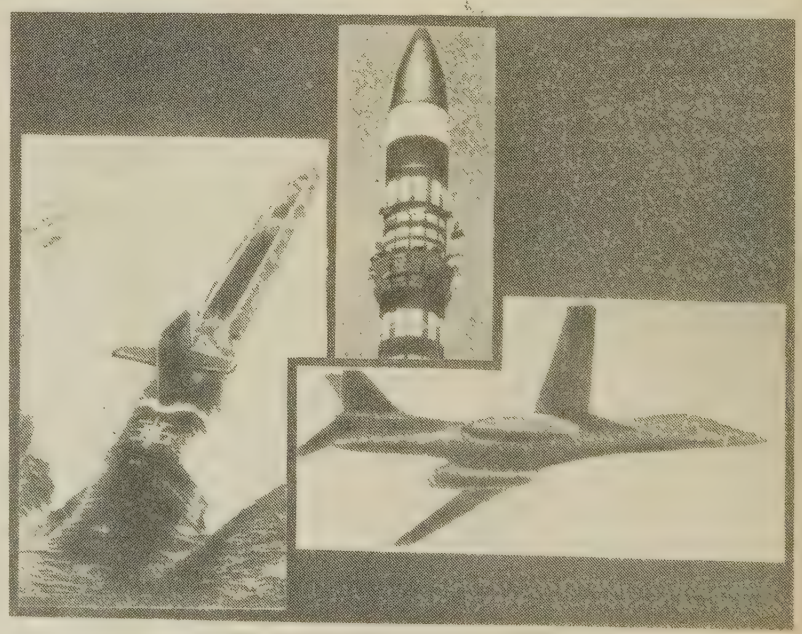
STRATEGIES AND CONTRACTS

While expanding the projects endorsed previously, President Reagan's strategic programme provides for the development and deployment of new weapons systems.

The new MX intercontinental ballistic missile, fitted out with 10 warheads of 600 kilotons each, has been put into production. The programme for the development of a new IBM, Midgetman, has been endorsed, and about 30 contracts signed with development companies.

The Trident-2 programme is being spurred on. Beginning with 1989, these missiles will be carried by the new Ohio-type atomic-powered submarines. The first five submarine missile carriers of this type have already been handed over to the U.S. Navy.

The B-1B strategic bombers are already going into service. Before 1989, the Pentagon intends buying 100 such planes, each capable of carrying up to 30 cruise missiles. Aircraft designers are actively working on the new-generation ATB strategic bomber using the technologies of its "invisible" Stealth prototype.



by the recent past. The appearance of MIRVs and their mass deployment in the early seventies, for instance, created problems of vulnerability and instability which Washington invokes today in an attempt to justify the need for the SDI programme.

The MIRVs, which at the time the American side would not hear of banning, detracted markedly from the security of all nations, the U.S. included. All stood to lose.

The development of a strike space weapon system is bound to have the same effect, only this time the consequences may prove irreversible. The Soviet Union is therefore making every effort to prevent things from taking such a turn. We are doing this not out of fear of losing the race the U.S. is trying to impose on us, but out of an awareness of what it can lead to.

The two great powers must do their utmost lest the chronicle of the nuclear age should become the last in the history of our civilization. The Soviet Union is prepared to go its part of the way. One would like to hope that U.S. political leaders are prepared to go theirs, despite the pressure being brought to bear on them by the tension-generating military-industrial complex. ■

"Inside the arms industry strategic defence—'star wars'—is now tacitly viewed as the greatest prospect for profit ever.

"The Military-Industrial Complex ... in the past 30 months cobbled together a miniature replica of itself —a kind of 'Star Complex' complete with 'star wars' lobbyists, 'star wars' news letters and 'star wars' division vice-presidents. Star Complex hopes to defend this new business opportunity against any threat, including political potshots, technical naysayers and irksome control agreements.

"Long before Reagan surprised most of the nation with his ode to 'star wars' the marketing wizards of the arms industry were scanning the heaven for new frontiers of profit.

"Rockwell International was one firm that found an answer in the stars. 'Space defence systems will be developed in the near future,' a company brochure predicted in 1981, two years before Reagan launched the SDI.

"Aerojet reached for the stars even sooner, beginning the pursuit of ballistic missile defences in 1946 because 'we concluded there was going to be a long-term future in defence,' James R. Rowe, a company vice-president, said."

Washington Post

PEN PORTRAIT OF A CORPORATION

ALEXANDER MOZGOVOI

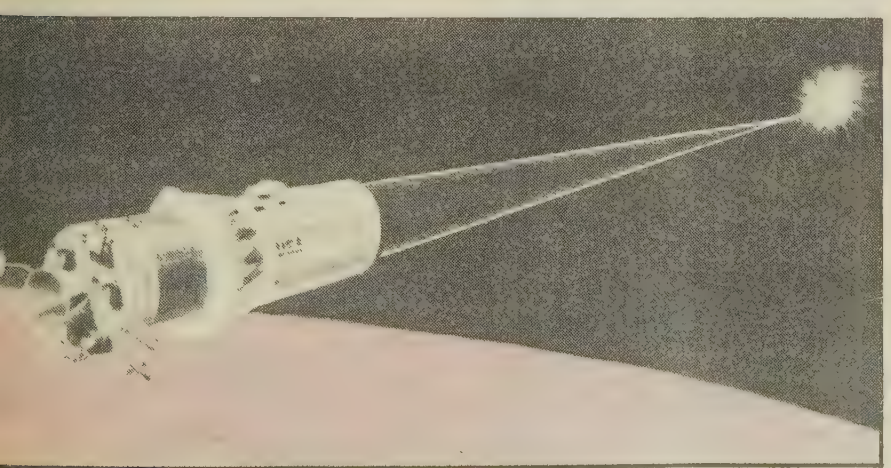
According to the New York Times, the "godfather" of General Dynamics (GD), leading Pentagon contractor, is often to be seen climbing out of a Cadillac on Chicago's South Michigan Avenue at 7.30 in the morning and walking into the barber's shop at the Conrad Hilton. Half an hour later, close-shaven and hair newly trimmed, the elderly gentleman sits down to work in his office.

He is shy of publicity. He doesn't need any—his name is known well enough in the business world. It is said that billionaire Howard Hughes once sent him a letter addressed simply to "Henry Crown, Chicago." It reached him without delay.

Henry Crown is now nearly 90. With his brother Sol he made his first million in 1924 through speculation and producing building materials. By 1940 the brothers' capital had already amounted to $10 million and was still growing. Crown hit the headlines in 1951 when he purchased the Empire State Building, then the world's tallest skyscraper, having borrowed $10 million from the First National Bank of Chicago. All his earlier operations, however, were just a prelude to what subsequently became his life's work, the arms business. In 1959 he bought a controlling interest in General Dynamics.

The corporation is almost as old as Henry Crown himself. It was founded in Groton, Connecticut, in 1895 as Holland Torpedo Boat by submarine designer John Holland. Shortly afterwards it merged with other companies to become Electric Boat. During World War I Electric Boat became a leading supplier of naval weapons. In World War II it won $324 million worth of contracts, bringing its owners $84 million in dividends.

Strategic Defence Initiative amounts to another attempt by Washington to gain military superiority. Strike space weapons like this laser space station (so far an artist's conception) are to be developed as part of SDI. Intended for hitting artificial earth satellites and ballistic missiles, such stations are being designed by the TRW and Rocketdyne firms.



After the war Electric Boat suffered a depressing slump. Orders shrank to a seventh of what they had been. But the lull in business was of short duration. The shooting war was followed by cold war. Militarization of the U.S. economy and politics began. The directors of Electric Boat had, as always, an eye to the main chance. In 1954 the company merged with the Morgan-controlled Consolidated Vultee Aircraft, one of the United States' foremost aircraft and missile manufacturers. The result was General Dynamics.

The jewel in Crown's financial-industrial empire, GD is a steady source of profit. The Chicago businessman confesses that he doesn't know exactly how much he is worth—the figure is changing all the time. More precisely, it is growing, at an average rate of $8 million a year.

Military-Industrial Complex? There Is None in America

Some time ago a Christian Science Monitor correspondent asked Frank Davis, vice-president of General Dynamics, what he thought about the late President Eisenhower's warning that the total influence—economic, political, even spiritual—of the military-industrial complex is felt in every city, every state house, every office of the federal government.

Davis replied without hesitation, "that term may have had reference to Europe 100 years ago ... but it does not apply to the United States today."

The American military-industrial complex is unthinkable without General Dynamics, so let us take a closer look at the corporation as it is today.

General Dynamics groups more than 20 companies employing a total of nearly 80,000. In 1980 the corporation received $3,518 billion worth of orders. Under the Reagan Administration the value of its contracts with the Pentagon has increased dramatically. As one director put it, the current international situation doesn't look too safe, so the outlook for our industry is bright.

In 1982 the corporation sold weapons to the tune of $5.5 billion, and in 1983, $6.8 billion. In 1984 things did not go so smoothly: General Dynamics, which once topped the list of the Pentagon's contractors, had to give way to McDonnell-Douglas and Rockwell International and to content itself with a "mere" $6 billion worth of orders (although Time magazine puts the figure at $7.8 billion). But even in the "bad" year of 1984 GD's profits went up by 33 per cent. According to Business Week, GD's backlog of multibillion dollar contracts will keep it busy till the end of the century.

● GD's shipbuilding division, Electric Boat, builds Ohio-type missile-carrying nuclear submarines. By 1992 it is to have supplied 17 such boats, with the Pentagon paying $1.2 billion for each. The company also builds atomic submarines of the Los Angeles type.

● F-16 fighter planes are assembled at Fort Worth, Texas. The U.S. Air Force intends to buy a total of 2,800 such planes for the sum of $55 billion.

● The Lima plant in Ohio has been making M-1 Abrams tanks since 1980. The Wall Street Journal describes them as the biggest and costliest ones in American history. Seven thousand of these armoured monsters will cost American taxpayers $19 billion.

● Missile manufacturers have orders for 1,160 Tomahawk sea- and ground-based cruise missiles worth a total of $6.2 billion. More than 4,000 cruise missiles are to be assembled altogether. Furthermore, GD makes Standard ship-to-air missiles, Stinger anti-aircraft complexes for ground troops, combat electronic systems, Volcano rapid-fire cannon, and so on.

In one field of arms production GD lags far behind its competitors, however. It comes only twentieth on the list of contractors for the "star wars" programme. This does not at all mean that the GD bosses do not believe in SDI. They are simply awaiting their opportunity.

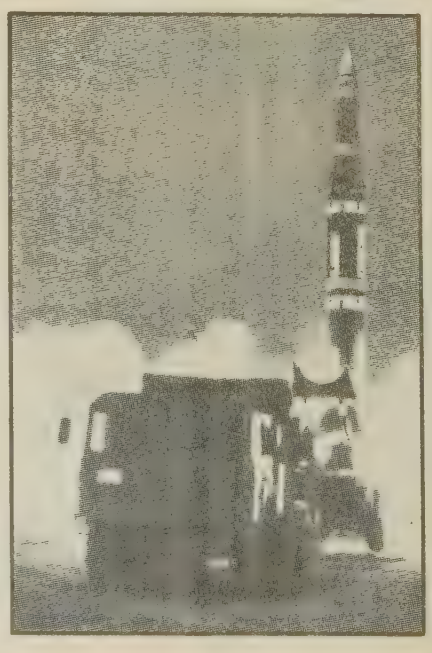
Bambi Reaches for the Stars

General Dynamics was already working on strike space complexes in December 1958 as part of the Bambi programme for deploying a far-flung network of missile-carrying satellites in near-earth space. These were intended to destroy strategic missiles the instant they were launched. The programme came up against insuperable technical difficulties and was scrapped.

In 1981 GD delegated its vice-president James Beggs to take up the post of NASA administrator. A GD man to the core, Beggs was determined to foist programmes that suited his corporation's interests on NASA. In particular, Beggs was pushing the idea of developing an aerospace plane capable of reaching the upper layers of the atmosphere, proceeding further out into space, and circling the earth in under two hours. The Pentagon and NASA received half a billion dollars for the development of this vehicle which is to take strike weapons into orbit.

As many as 2,240 of the Pentagon's high-ranking military and civilian staffers have transferred to the arms industry over the past three years.

The GD bosses regard the development of electromagnetic guns as another promising aspect of SDI. Last July General Dynamics signed its first contract with the Pentagon for the development of this weapon. Although General Dynamics is being offered strong competi-



As many as 108 Pershing 2 medium-range missiles—products of the military-industrial complex—have been deployed in the F.R.G. In its 1979 decision on "rearmament" the excuse NATO gave for the deployment of the Pershing 2 and cruise missiles in Western Europe was the allegedly increased danger presented by the Soviet Union's SS-20 missiles. The West first brought up this "danger" in 1977, but new American Euromissiles had appeared earlier than that. Back in February 1969 the Pentagon placed an order for a new medium-range missile with the Martin-Orlando company. The U.S. Army budget for the fiscal year 1975 allocated special funds for the development of the Pershing 2 missile to be deployed in Europe. Work on the Tomahawk cruise missile was going full blast in those years. General Dynamics won a contract for making it in 1972.

tion in this field by Boeing and Ford Aerospace, the odds are in its favour. After all, Texas University — a demesne of GD's aerospace division — has already built the GD prototype electromagnetic gun firing 85-gram shells at a high initial velocity. An improved model, GD 2, is on the drawing boards.

Why is General Dynamics putting its money on aerospace planes and electromagnetic guns? It regards laser and beam weapons as too futuristic. According to the Washington Post, the directors of SDI are going to give top priority to complexes that depend on kinetic energy for their operation.

This decision was prompted by James Beggs. Incidentally, General Dynamics has made it a practice to send its managers to work in government departments and replace them with men from the Pentagon and other departments. Generals Joseph McNarney, M.W. Arnold, F. MulCahy, admirals Lawrence Richardson, Andrew McKee, John Hayward and hundreds of other senior officers have held and continue to hold executive posts with the company.

The System Works

In 1978 Edward Hidalgo, U.S. Navy Secretary, negotiated with GD following a claim by the corporation that the funds allocated for the construction of 18 Los Angeles submarines had proved insufficient. The Secretary found the claim well founded, and General Dynamics got an extra $642 million. Upon Mr Hidalgo's retirement from the Pentagon, the corporation immediately took him on as chief legal adviser and gave him a bonus of $66,000.

It later transpired that General Dynamics' claim had been without foundation. P. Takis Veliotis, head of the company's Electric Boat division and vice-president of GD, admitted that the corporation had deliberately underestimated the value of the original contracts in order to beat its competitors. Harassed by investigation committees, Veliotis preferred to leave the United States for his native Greece lest he become a scapegoat. From there, he started bombarding the Pentagon and other government departments with evidence of General Dynamics' criminal tactics. Initially, his exposés were dismissed, but murder will out. George Sawyer, Assistant Navy Secretary, was instructed to look into the scandal. His verdict was that the incident did not warrant legal proceedings. Having retired from the Pentagon, Mr Sawyer was given $210,000-a-year job of vice-president of General Dynamics.

But attempts to sweep the submarine scandal under the carpet failed. GD's competitors were quick to take advantage of it. In the spring of 1985 newspapers and magazines carried sensational reports to the effect that General Dynamics had swindled the Treasury of millions of dollars (see New Times No. 38, 1985). Eventually, the Pentagon suspended its payments to the corporation, and David Lewis, chairman of GD, resigned.

Its competitors' activities certainly affected GD's arms order books, but not much. In just eight months—from August 1984, when the investigation began, until April 1985—the Pentagon placed orders with it to a total of $5 billion, including orders for $2.3 billion worth of F-16 fighter planes, $1.6 billion worth of Ohio submarines, and $1.1 billion worth of Abrams tanks.

At the beginning of August Everett Pyatt, Assistant Navy Secretary, announced that the "sanctions" against GD—token as they were—had been called off. The corporation received $680 million right away for the construction of another missile-carrying submarine. George Sawyer also got off scot-free. John Lehman, the Navy Secretary, defended him himself and on Christmas Eve the Federal Grand Jury in Alexandria, Virginia, dropped all charges against him. The system works, and I am mighty pleased, Sawyer announced leaving the courtroom.

While Sawyer celebrated his victory, clouds were gathering over James Beggs' head. It turned out that as GD vice-president he and three other executives of the corporation had robbed the government of $3.2 million by padding the Sergeant York anti-aircraft gun development bills. Under the U.S. criminal code, this carries a 30-year prison sentence. Beggs dismissed the charges, however, saying that he and his colleagues had acted fully in keeping with legal, moral and ethical norms.

The White House decided that the NASA administrator should keep a low profile and sent him away on indefinite leave. The Pentagon also "disciplined" General Dynamics by temporarily depriving it of the right to sign contracts with the Navy Department. Prior contracts, however, remain in force and are being carried out at full steam. The funds allocated for them will last for years. Furthermore, the Pentagon has postponed for an indefinite period another round of bargaining with the shipbuilding companies over the construction of new-type nuclear submarines to enable GD to tender. Thomas Brokaw, an NBC commentator, remarked in this connection that no corporation now means more to the Pentagon than General Dynamics, and no corporation makes as free with the Treasury's money.

We could add that no other corporation is on such cosy terms with the Pentagon.

■

PERTINENT POINTS

George P. Shultz, U.S. Secretary of State—former president of the Bechtel Corporation.

Caspar Weinberger, Secretary of Defence—former Bechtel's general counsel and one of its directors.

W. Kenneth Davis, Deputy Secretary of Energy—formerly Bechtel's vice-president for nuclear development.

Alexander M. Haig, ex-Secretary of State—former president of United Technologies, one of the Pentagon's leading contractors.

Paul Thayer, Deputy Secretary of Defence—former chairman of the arms corporation LTV.

John Lehman, Secretary of the Navy—once owned the Abington Corporation, a consulting firm whose clients included the Northrop, Boeing and TRW arms concerns.

Richard Perle, Assistant Secretary of Defence—used to work for the Abington Corporation.

The illustrations have been reproduced from Der Spiegel and Quick (F.R.G.), Time, Newsweek and U.S. News and World Report (U.S.A.), from the book "Whence the Threat to Peace" (U.S.S.R.).

THE EMPEROR

Looking at Robert Hersant

"We want to see established in France a new, just and strong state. We want that strength no longer to be turned to the advantage of Jews and Freemasons...." Those lines appeared in the Jeunes Forces (Young Forces), a newspaper published in nazi-occupied Paris.

His Allegiance

The man who published the paper was one Robert Hersant. The publication licence, No. 623, was issued him by the Paris branch of Goebbels' Ministry without any hesitation. There could be no cause for any. Young Hersant had formed his opinions when he had gone to a nazi party congress in Nuremberg before the war and had found himself very much in his element there. Soon after the fall of Paris, the occupiers made him chief of the pro-nazi youth organization Jeune Front, whose job was to inform on Resistance fighters and help to arrest them and send them off to concentration camp....

Is there any point in recalling all that now? Yes indeed, it is very much to the point.

Posters on Paris walls today cry, "Help! The Right's coming back!" or "One step to the Right means three steps backward." The parliamentary election campaign is getting into full swing. The forecast is all but unanimous: the Right-wing parties, which ruled the country until 1981, have a good chance of regaining a majority and forming the government, with which the Socialist President would then have to coexist. The situation, already complex enough, may become even more so. If only because besides the traditional Right—the Alliance for the Republic and the Union for French Democracy—the National Assembly may for the first time include representatives of the neo-fascist National Front.

Once again we see confirmed that when times are critical, fascism rises to the political surface. Even under the Socialists France has not escaped the crisis gripping the international capitalist system. And NF Fuehrer Le Pen, former follower of the ultra-Right Poujade, former torturing paratroop lieutenant in Algeria, former purveyor of recordings of Hitler's speeches and Hitler Youth songs, and now member of the European Parliament, is campaigning under the slogan of "national union." He is bidding for the support of all who share his racist and anti-communist extremism.

But just lately it has emerged that Le Pen is not the only threat to democracy and the republic.

Twelve candidates for the Assembly (integrated in the candidate lists of the traditional Rightist parties) are being put up by Robert Hersant. Yes, that same Hersant.

And Philippe Boucher of Le Monde asks not without reason: "What if M. Hersant fares better than M. Le Pen?"

His Career

Let us trace, if only sketchily, the line from the Robert Hersant our story started with to the one operating today.

After the war ended, in the summer of 1945, Hersant was arrested along with other collaborationists. However, his durance was of no great duration. In 1947 he was sentenced to ten years of "national opprobrium," but that did not particularly discommode him. Early in 1950 he already managed to secure the authorities' permission to publish a tourist guide. Having not a centime for this enterprise, he sent out a circular (6,000 copies) to France's hoteliers, offering a subscription for inclusion in his guide. Six hundred responded and duly sent him the required 2,800 francs each. Not that the tourist guide was ever published. The capital thus conjured into existence was used to start a motoring paper, the Auto-Journal, carrying car manufacturers' advertising.

In 1956, by when he had further acquired the provincial paper Oise-matin, Hersant got himself elected to parliament (where, we may mention, Le Pen also had a seat at the time). But when his record during the occupation was revealed, the Assembly annulled his election. The end of Hersant? Not on your life! He stood again and got back into the Chamber.

By 1975 Hersant owned a whole slew of publications: Yachting, The Hunting Magazine, Angling and Fish, Delicious Cuisine, Your Knitting, and a score of others both in metropolitan France and in the overseas departments in the Antilles. An Empire? Not yet. An emperor's throne had to be in Paris. And Hersant didn't have any Paris-based national newspaper.

They say it's rags, not woodpulp, that makes the best grades of paper. The nonagenarian textile magnate Jean Prouvost, owner of Le Figaro, one of France's biggest papers, could no longer be bothered with the journalist tribe. Le Figaro was up for sale. Hersant had ten million francs. Prouvost wanted sixty. And in a matter of days Hersant found them. Who were the accommodating creditors? That he alone knew, and he was good at keeping his own counsel.

Before the purchaser's name was known, the Figaro journalists railed that "We're being sold like cattle and don't even know who's buying us and on what terms." On learning who they had been sold to, they loudly proclaimed their "categorical opposition to M. Hersant." They went on strike. On July 2, 1975, Le Figaro did not appear. In the issue of July 3, the paper's editor, Jean d'Ormesson, declared the dedication of the now Hersant-owned Figaro to "quality, tradition, strictest objectivity and freedom."

Before long the "emperor" took over two more of the country's leading newspapers—France-Soir and L'Aurore, the paper that had once carried writings by Clemenceau and by Zola....

"I'm Number One!"

And now the time was early January 1986. For a large sum of money Hersant's son Philippe became proprietor of the Reims newspaper L'Union, dating back to the great Resistance struggle. While Hersant-père bought the firm of Progrès de Lyon, publisher of five papers in various cities. This scandalous deal was done in Lyons, the city that France calls "the capital of the Resistance." And the city where thousands perished at the hands of the SS murderer Klaus Barbie.

The Lyons operation provoked a storm of protest. People suddenly realized that Hersant's was indeed an empire. And recalled that in 1984 parliament had passed a press law, even if rather a mild one. That law forbids monopolization of

France's Hersant would like to see it: no publications but his. Read what he wants you to read. Think what he wants you to think.

Cartoon from the Paris journal Révolution

the press. One person may own no more than 10 per cent of the country's periodicals. Hersant, even before his Lyons "burglary," owned more than two score papers and magazines, with over 40 per cent of the circulation of the national press and about 20 per cent of the provincial. Under the provisions of the press law there is a special government committee whose full name is Committee to Ensure Transparency (i.e., financial accountability) and Pluralism of the Press. Committee chairman Henri Caillavet declared that Hersant's Lyons deal was illegal. That he could be fined and barred from the newspaper world for ten years.

"Rubbish," shrugged Hersant, and proclaimed in a banner headline in his beloved Le Figaro, "I'm Number One!" He feels certain nothing will be done to him, for, in the first place, he enjoys immunity as a European MP; and secondly, there is the election just around the corner, in March. He figures that the Right will make a comeback and parliament will then pass quite a different press law, which will be formulated by himself. For aren't they already planning to make him Information Minister? To be sure, some do hint that the post won't really be big enough for him, that from his ministerial office he will be casting covetous glances at the Palais de l'Elysée. Only two years left to go to the presidential election....

His One Rule

Of course, today all this still belongs to the realm of political fantasy. But hasn't the career been fantastic? Isn't it clear that Hersant really is a menace?

Le Pen was brought into the political foreground by the situation. His following consists mainly of despairing shopkeepers, former Algeria landowners, confused anarchists, dedicated racists, ex-ultra-Leftists.... This motley crew is quite numerous, excitable and noisy. They are impressed by their leader's insolence, his ebullience, his fascist credo, his promise to "tread the Marxist devil in the mire," his foreign policy "conceptions." Asked in an interview what kind of Europe he would like to see, Le Pen replied without a moment's hesitation: "Europe in its present form is obsolete. Let us have the courage to say that World War II was a defeat for Europe.... We let the Russians get to the Elbe. But I shall never accept the decisions taken in Yalta or Helsinki.... I am an Atlanticist. I believe in hierarchical communities...." That interview was given by the NF chief to Hersant. Or, to be precise, to Hersant's weekly Le Figaro-Magazine.

The well-known French politologist, the late Raymond Aron, who spoke for and to the privileged elite, was "bought" by Hersant in 1975 to be Le Figaro's top commentator. Aron never made any secret of his anti-communism and anti-Sovietism; another of his gods was liberalism, now again in vogue. Well, two days after the paper passed into the new hands, Aron had an article in it entitled "The Difficulties of Freedom." It spoke of the difficulties of the free Western press, which, sold and sold again, gets freer all the time, unlike the "unanimity press," as Aron called the press in "ideocratic states," that is, in socialist countries. In the West, in his view, there is only one difficulty: "In all countries where the press, radio and TV are free in relation to the state, the question is, who owns the capital of these enterprises and what influence the owners exert on the writers or broadcasters."

Robert Hersant is no exception to this rule of the media game. And he plays that game with fierce absorption, without a thought of any other rules. No thought of such things as ethics or objectivity. The capital is his. So the papers are his. And so is a whole string of "free" (that is, private) radio stations which he has recently acquired. He is bidding in the TV market too. He hopes to buy the Antenne 2 company, or the Canal Plus, or both. Or perhaps he'll set up a TV network of his own, covering all Europe. His money supply really seems unlimited. Where it comes from, nobody knows. They say he owes 600 million francs. Astronomical! Money like that is loaned long-term only to people who will long be of use and service.

Victor TSOPPI

New Soviet proposals on the principles of a Cyprus settlement and the means of achieving it have met with a wide international response

A SOLUTION DOES EXIST

The problem of Cyprus has been on the list of unsettled international disputes for over 11 years.

When they left Cyprus, the British and their allies had not abandoned the idea of regaining control of the island. Not openly as a colony, perhaps, but firmly and thoroughly nonetheless. They thought the most effective means of doing so was to divide the Greek and Turkish Cypriots against each other and foment intercommunal strife. This gave rise to the plan of "double enosis," the partitioning of the island between Greece and Turkey, two allies in the North Atlantic bloc. When these plans went awry, NATO headquarters came up with the idea of a military putsch and foreign occupation which led to bloody clashes in the summer of 1974.

It was not only among the people of Cyprus, however, that plans to partition the island met with opposition. From the outset the Cypriots had the socialist and non-aligned countries on their side. The Soviet Union, which had been one of the first to recognize the young Republic of Cyprus, came out in favour of preserving a united, territorially integral, independent sovereign state pursuing the policy of non-alignment chosen by its people. "The Soviet Union firmly and consistently supports the independence of the state of Cyprus, a member of the United Nations," read the Soviet government's statement of August 22, 1974. "The Soviet government believes that urgent and effective measures are necessary to safeguard the Republic of Cyprus from outside interference, to ensure the withdrawal of all foreign troops from the territory of Cyprus, and to give Cypriots the opportunity to decide the affairs of their state for themselves." Simultaneously the Soviet Union proposed a representative national conference under the auspices of the U.N. to consider and settle all international aspects of the problem of Cyprus in the interests of all concerned.

This approach is maintained and elaborated in the new Soviet proposals on the principles of a settlement in Cyprus and the means of achieving it. These contain a comprehensive and detailed blueprint for collective efforts on the part of all interested parties aimed at achieving a just solution of the question, which would, first and foremost, satisfy the Cypriots themselves, both Greek and Turkish. The whole issue, states the new Soviet document, must be resolved within the framework of the United Nations and on the basis of its resolutions.

This is precisely what the enemies of an independent Cyprus have always wished to avoid. Their cherished dream is to settle the question of Cyprus within the narrow context of NATO, impose their patronage on Cyprus and saddle it with a political option that would suit Western strategists. That is why the Western powers have always been hostile to the idea of a representative international conference, hypocritically describing it as unrealistic and incapable of producing viable decisions. They, however, had nothing more realistic to offer in its place.

Cyprus has now been partitioned to all intents and purposes for over eleven years but the problem has not moved any closer to a solution. This outcome may suit NATO and Washington who follow the principle of "divide and rule," but it does not suit the Cypriots and their true friends. In its recent proposals the Soviet Union renews the call for an international conference, considering it to be a "realistic approach to ensuring a cardinal solution for the international aspects of the problem of Cyprus." Early comments show that this approach is shared by the present leadership of the Republic of Cyprus, the U.N. Secretary-General and all those who are really interested in a just and early settlement.

An international conference could, amongst other things, work out a system of effective international guarantees of the independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of Cyprus and respect for its non-aligned status, guarantees that would rule out any possibility of interference in its affairs in the future. To this end the Soviet Union has proposed to increase the number of guarantor states who would include, along with Greece and Turkey, the permanent members of the U.N. Security Council or the Security Council as a whole, as well as some non-aligned countries.

Indeed, the system of guarantees developed by Britain under the 1960 Zurich-London agreement which names Britain, Greece and Turkey as the only guarantors, has proved unworkable. The interests of Cyprus could be more effectively safeguarded if the system of guarantors included not a small number of states belonging to the same military-political grouping, but a whole number of countries with different foreign policies.

Another important point in the new Soviet proposals is the complete demilitarization of the island as an obligatory condition of settlement. The Soviet Union considers the use of Cypriot territory by other states for military purposes inadmissible. This is not a Soviet invention prompted by one or other military-strategic interest. Cypriots themselves have always favoured the demilitarization of the island and wished to rid it of the foreign military presence. They know that the crux of the Cyprus issue lies in military presence and not in the artificially fomented intercommunal strife.

Alien hands are reaching towards the island because it is a convenient military bridgehead on the approaches to the Middle East. It is not by chance that the British colonialists on leaving Cyprus, retained possession of 99 square miles of the island's territory for their military bases. Nor is it an accident that the United States, in encouraging a divisive approach, is keen to secure the right to have its own military installations in the occupied north of the island. The Pentagon has already built an airfield there, the largest in the region, and is creating a naval base and other military facilities. The aim of this imperialistic activity around Cyprus is to consolidate the military presence. That is why the demand for demilitarization is central to any just settlement.

The problem of Cyprus has been deadlocked far too long. The present Soviet initiative is aimed at breaking that deadlock.

N. MIROSHNIK

CAN INFLATION BE CURBED?

Late in 1985 the Presidency of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia heard a report on the country's economic situation presented by the Federal Executive Council. Particular attention was paid to the key economic problem of inflation. The head of the Yugoslav government, Milka Planinc, said that the negative trends in the economy had been growing over the past year in spite of the measures taken.

"Inflation Is Our Biggest Problem," "Why Are Prices Soaring?", "Halt the Devaluation of the Dinar." Yugoslav newspapers have recently bristled with these and similar headlines. Yugoslav economists cite official data on the rate of the inflation which has become endemic in the country. The rise in retail prices from which the level of inflation is calculated in Yugoslavia increased from 30 per cent in 1980 to 46 per cent in 1981 and over 50 per cent in 1982, reaching nearly 60 per cent in 1983-84. "We have to admit the unhappy fact that Yugoslavia has become one of the ten countries with the highest inflation rates," the Belgrade newspaper Borba wrote in this connection.

Unfreezing of Prices

Some Yugoslav economists had contended that the government freeze on most prices was a hindrance to the normal functioning of the market-oriented economy. On November 28, 1984, the Yugoslav parliament passed a law allowing free price formation, leaving only the prices of electricity, petroleum products, transport and communications under direct federal control.

However, the unfreezing of prices, far from having a stabilizing effect, led to dramatic increases. In early 1985 the electricity rate was raised by 33.5 per cent, central heating by 27 per cent, and fares on public transport by 23.5 per cent. Prices of flour, bread and other bakery products rose by about 18 per cent. Retail prices increased for practically all foodstuffs and many industrial goods. According to Yugoslav economists, inflation reached almost 80 per cent in the first ten months of 1985.

Why has galloping inflation set in?

There is no simple answer to this question.

"Inflation in Yugoslavia is the result of profound disarray in our economy," Nikola Stojanovic, member of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia, told a press conference on April 18. He said that serious changes in the country's economic policy were needed to stabilize the situation. "It is necessary to take fuller account of the economic laws and planned guidelines of social and economic development and become involved in the international division of labour on a broader and more effective scale." When Yugoslavs talk about the drawbacks of the country's economic system they refer first and foremost to the imbalance between the manufacturing and extractive industries. Relying on the import of raw materials and fuel, Yugoslavia has for many years underused its own resources.

"Among the chief causes of inflation is the growing cost of production," thinks Petrasin Petrasinovic, director of the Market Research Institute in Belgrade. Between 1980 and 1984 production costs increased 4.2 times to 74.7 per cent of the price of industrial goods. Many enterprises, according to Petrasinovic, see price increases as a way out of the situation. This triggers a chain reaction of "economically valid" demands by other producers for a rise in the retail prices of their goods.

Another economist, Biserka Matic, writing in the newspaper Politika, claims that "the flow of public resources into personal property is a major factor in accelerating inflation." Unfortunately, there are many ways in which such a transformation of capital can take place in this country, writes Matic in an article entitled "Appropriation of Public Property." This occurs, for instance, as a result of constant cuts in depreciation charges while personal incomes grow. Another significant factor is the runaway growth of prices of agricultural products and easy-term bank loans to private citizens. The devaluation of the dinar, Matic points out, is the most commonly implemented means of siphoning off public resources into the hands of certain strata of the population. It benefits those who invest convertible currency (chiefly Yugoslavs who have worked or are working abroad). As a result of the devaluation the bank accounts of this section of the population automatically increased by 700 billion dinars between 1980 and 1983. In this way resources vitally needed for the society are irretrievably lost and purchasing capacity outstrips the growth of available commodities.

There is not only an economic, but also a political and class aspect to the channelling of public capital into private hands. As the position of investors in convertible currency grows stronger the living standards of much of the population are deteriorating, concludes Biserka Matic.

Looking for Solutions

Yugoslavia's official foreign debt to the West amounted to about $20 billion by the beginning of 1985 (interest on credits excluded). That figure does not include the new loans which Yugoslavia has received in recent months. "It is now absolutely clear that we could not avoid inflation because of the huge foreign debt," asserts Zvonko Logar, a noted journalist and authority in the field of economics. Yugoslavia's vast commitments in credit repayments brought about a sharp drop in investment which led to the underloading of industry, rising unemployment, falling living standards and growing social stratification. According to Egon Stajner, a Yugoslav economist, the sum of the debts Yugoslavia will pay to the West annually over the next four years equals the total investment in the economy in 1983.

"At last we are beginning to get rid of the illusion that officials from the International Monetary Fund and other world banking centres come to Yugoslavia to find ways of 'helping' it," Slobodan Vukmanovic wrote in the newspaper Borba. We signed each of these agreements because of dire need while our creditors did so because they wanted to increase their capital at our expense, Vukmanovic goes on. There can be no question of any coincidence of interests and goals between the IMF and Yugoslavia's long-term programme for economic stabilization.

"The terms on which the International Monetary Fund grants credits to Yugoslavia amount to disregard for and neglect of some of the key provisions of the anti-inflationary programme," said Batric Jovanovic in the Yugoslav parliament. "Why don't we use our huge internal reserves instead of foreign credits and earn the necessary currency?" he asked. His point of view was supported by other delegates.

The April 1985 meeting of the Central Committee of the League of Commu-

nists of Yugoslavia pointed out that the growth of prices cannot be halted by half measures. The way out is greater economic efficiency, higher labour productivity, stricter financial discipline, and the combating of tendencies to parasitism. Last May the government launched new measures to stabilize the situation. In particular, privileges are to be introduced to encourage enterprises to operate more work shifts. Better conditions are to be provided to boost exports, banks are to develop a programme to reschedule the debts of enterprises, and consumer goods in short supply on the internal market are to be imported. Those guilty of financial irregularities and embezzlement of public property will be more severely punished. Vlado Klemencic, Federal Secretary for Finance, announced the government's concrete anti-inflationary measures, including a partial reform of the banking system, the drafting of a new law on credits and measures to improve the coordination of financial activity between the republics and autonomous regions.

Only by overcoming stagnation and forging ahead can undesirable social and economic processes be arrested and the realization of the long-term programme for economic stabilization started in real earnest. This is the opinion of Milka Planinc. She told a meeting of the government that administrative measures to curb inflation cannot be sufficiently effective. The first thing to be done is to increase production and get it moving again.

Promising Signs

In the autumn of last year government officials gave firm assurances that the internal market will be provided with such prime necessities as sugar, flour, butter, detergents and other goods which have at times been in short supply. The tourist industry is expected to yield considerable currency earnings, amounting to an estimated $1.3 billion a year. It is hoped that the country's balance of payments will be favourable this year.

The Yugoslav press reports that signs of recovery have appeared in some industries and that a number of enterprises have exceeded their planned targets. On September 6 Borba carried an article about the good success of the Svoboda spinning and weaving factory in the town of Kula which has been able to sustain a high economic performance. "The secret of our success is simple," says the factory manager, Jakov Bukovic. "We have strict production discipline. We have stopped buying large quantities of imported raw materials. While formerly we imported 90 per cent of our wool yarn from abroad, we now rely more on local resources and have cut imports of raw materials to a third. Our factory works in three shifts and this has dramatically increased the coefficient of the use of machinery. We earmark considerable sums for the modernization of production, and study the market carefully in order to produce competitive high-quality goods. In 1985 the Svoboda factory exported three million dollars' worth of goods, twice as much as in 1984."

This is one of many such entreprises in Yugoslavia. Engineers in the town of Nis are committed to increasing their output by 20 per cent compared with plan targets. Miners are also increasing output. The press reports good work by car manufacturers in Kragujevac. However, Yugoslavia's top economic executives consider these successes modest and warn against excessive optimism.

The Yugoslav leaders are working persistently to increase production and sustain the result achieved up to now. At the meeting of the Presidency of Yugoslavia late in 1985 it was indicated that inflation is the key problem for the immediate future and that the activity of government and party bodies and organizations, the work collectives, trade unions and all the working people should be geared to resolving it. A good economic start this year would go a long way towards fulfilling the plans for the next five years.

L. KHARKOV
Our Special Correspondent
Belgrade

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

The Globe and Mail, a leading Canadian newspaper, recently carried an article by its Moscow correspondent Lawrence Martin. It deals with Soviet-Canadian relations in the sphere of scientific and cultural relations and is an attempt to determine without bias who stands for the development of contacts and the fulfilment of the Helsinki accords, and who is opposed to this. He points out, among other things, that with the exception of Canada, most Western countries despite political differences have renewed or widened their exchange agreements with the Soviet Union. "The United States," he says, "will begin exchanges unprecedented in volume this year."

It will be recalled that scientific and cultural contacts based on an agreement between the two countries concluded in 1971 under the Trudeau government were broken off when the Conservatives came to power. This was done "in retaliation" for the internationalist assistance our country rendered its neighbour Afghanistan. In 1981, when the term of the agreement expired, Canada did not renew it. Since then a few contacts were maintained chiefly by private companies, universities and non-governmental organizations.

"There is no question," Martin says, "that some Canadian interests are suffering without formal agreement." In this period Canadian scientists have been deprived of the experience they could have acquired given ties with the Soviet Union. With a few exceptions, Canadian scientific workers are unable to take advanced courses in the Soviet Union and Canadian artists cannot perform in the U.S.S.R. on an exchange basis. The correspondent cites a member of the staff of the Canadian embassy in Moscow as saying that as regards scientific exchanges "Canada would probably have more to gain from an arrangement with the Soviet Union than vice versa."

Martin goes on to say that after the spring 1985 visit to the U.S.S.R. of the Canadian External Affairs Minister Joe Clark "there is little question that the political will exists in Canada for renewed exchanges." What, then, is the problem? The article itself provides the answer. "Canadian officials," Martin writes, "say the Soviet Union is basically prepared to go along with an exchange agreement" as soon as Canada is ready to do so.

V. SVETLANOV

The Channel tunnel is now to be built

30-MINUTE FIXED LINK

Were Napoleon alive today, he would be gratified that an idea he contemplated almost two centuries ago is to be translated into reality.

Work started on a tunnel near Dover in England and Calais in France in 1974. However, people in Kent, the south of England, were not enthusiastic about the venture as they feared damage to the environment.

But interest in the old idea prevailed and major industrial and financial corporations swung into action. A number of projects were submitted and in the final stage of the contest four of them were running neck-and-neck.

The first scheme, put forward by the Anglo-French Channel Tunnel-France Manche consortium, envisages the construction of two rail tunnels 40 metres under the Channel bed. The tunnels will be 7.3 metres in diameter and about 50 km long, of which 37 km will be under the Channel. Cars, trucks and coaches will drive onto specially built flatcars as onto a ferry and high-speed (160 km ph) trains will leave every few minutes, reaching the terminal on the opposite side in 30 minutes.

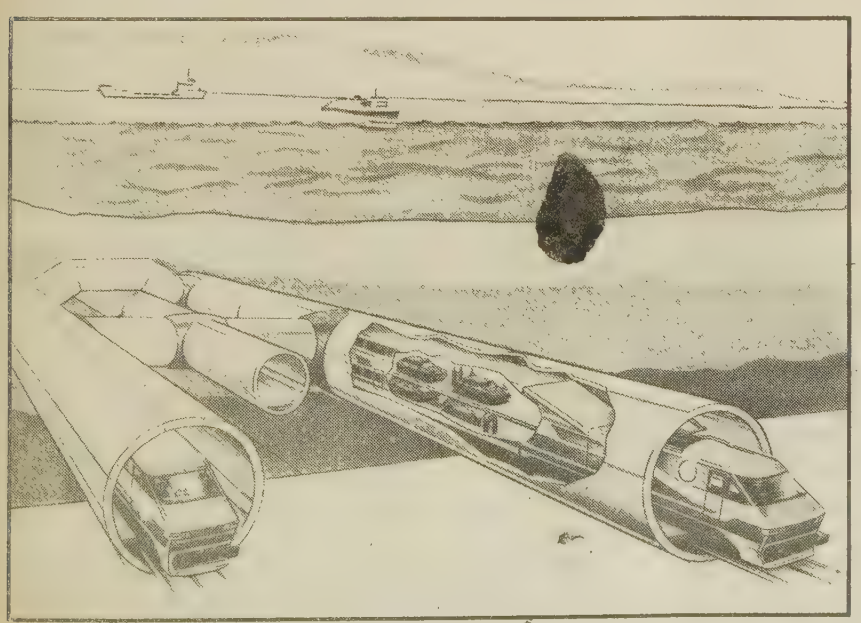
A rival project, Channel Expressway, consists of a twin-bored tunnel, with each 11 m tube housing a two-lane expressway for motor traffic; railway tracks are also to be laid to make the tunnel dual-purpose; an option with a separate rail tunnel has been proposed.

The third contender is Eurobridge, which, in a radical departure from the first two ideas, suggests a bridge 70 metres above the water, consisting of 4.5 km spans on 400 m pylons, with two levels of traffic travelling on six-lane decks.

The fourth scheme, Euroroute, has been described by the London Financial Times as "bold and imaginative." However, the newspaper criticizes its high cost and adventurous nature. The designers plan to build two 700 m by 500 m artificial islands, one 8.5 km off the English coast and the other 7 km off the coast of France. The islands will have shops, hotels, parking space for 2,000 cars and berths for yachts. Bridges are to extend from either coast to the islands, which are to be connected in mid-Channel by a tunnel 21 km long at a depth of 30 metres under the seabed.

Designers' view of rail tunnels under the Channel. Trains will leave every few minutes on the main tunnels, and a third, narrower tunnel will be used for maintenance. The construction of another tunnel for road traffic is not excluded.

From the London Financial Times



The final decision has now been made. Meeting at Lille, France, on January 20, President Mitterrand and Prime Minister Thatcher chose the first of the above projects. The contract on the project, due to be launched in 1987 and finished in 1993, is to be signed in London in February and 32 banks are expected to provide an estimated £2.6-5 bln.

The Western press observes that it is a political decision as both countries are plagued by high unemployment and a variety of other social and economic problems. The ambitious project is intended to demonstrate the desire of the two governments to create new jobs. (However, according to expert estimates, the project will employ 75,000 workers at the most and will do little to alleviate unemployment in Britain and France which have between them more than five million jobless.)

The decision taken in Lille evoked mixed reactions. The French Chamber of Commerce, for one, is against the scheme. The Paris newspaper Libération reports that the local authorities concerned are at once attracted by lucrative contracts and wary of the havoc that will be wrought by large-scale construction work. Several major ports in both countries, among them Dover and Calais, predictably face ruin, and jobless seamen will lose their last hope of employment.

Farmers on both sides of the Channel will also sustain losses. A French TV report from a coastal area in France noted: "People in this area do not believe that the tunnel project can help create new jobs. Conversely, many farmers will suffer as their best land will be taken up by construction work." The French Communists, who support the interests of ordinary people, urged the government immediately to consider a plan to normalize the situation in the departments of the Nord and the Pas-de-Calais in view of the effect of the tunnel project on the local economy.

Observers predict that criticism of the project will grow, especially since a number of specialists are already voicing doubts about the feasibility of constructing and operating the tunnel. The two governments' decision on such an important matter without a public debate has so far saved Paris and London from criticism of the negative aspects of the project, Le Matin of Paris noted, but such criticism is inevitable.

V. ZHITOMIRSKY

TAKING UP A POINT

You say that the U.S.S.R. will pull out of Afghanistan as soon as guarantees of non-intervention in the country's affairs are given. I think this is an attempt by the Russians to disclaim responsibility for the introduction and maintenance of troops in a foreign country. Why should everyone do what the U.S.S.R. wants before the Afghan question can be resolved?

Olof GUSTAFSSON
Stockholm, Sweden

Our staff writer **LEV YELIN** replies:

To begin with, it should be made clear what it is that the Soviet Union wants and what its goals are. The U.S.S.R. is in favour of Afghanistan being an independent non-aligned state, and I believe that this should not raise any objections, all the less so as this is exactly what the Afghans themselves have always wanted.

A national democratic revolution took place in Afghanistan in April 1978. If you take a look at the history of the country, which was not long ago occasionally referred to as a "fossil of the Dark Ages," you will understand that it was not Moscow intrigues but natural historical processes that led to the April revolution. The revolution met with strong opposition in the West, the U.S. in particular. As has been the case more than once over the past few decades, Washington relied on counterrevolution, and this is the crux of the problem. Between June and November 1979 alone, the CIA trained and armed 30,000 Afghan counterrevolutionaries in Pakistan. That was how counterrevolutionary opposition to progressive change developed into an aggression from without.

As time went on, the situation deteriorated and the very integrity and sovereignty of Afghanistan were placed in jeopardy. In December 1979, after repeated requests from the Afghan leadership, the Soviet Union agreed to send a limited Soviet troop contingent to the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan in accordance with Article 51 of the U.N. Charter and the 1978 bilateral Soviet-Afghan Treaty of Friendship, Good-Neighbourliness and Cooperation.

Let us now see what the U.S.S.R. wants. It would have withdrawn its troops from Afghanistan long ago, but this step does not fit in with U.S. plans. The White House is trying to draw the "Afghan tangle" as tightly as possible and to make it a constant headache for the U.S.S.R. both politically and militarily. This explains why the U.S. has made $1.2 billion in aid available to the counterrevolutionaries over the past few years. An infrastructure for undeclared war against Afghanistan has been set up and is being expanded; it consists of more than 120 camps and roughly 100 arms depots and transit points. That is why the question of guarantees has arisen. If the Soviet troop contingent is withdrawn, will not the 1979 aggressive plans be revived, now on a larger scale? The United States did not shrink from a direct act of aggression against Grenada, so what will prevent it from sending mercenary Afghan counterrevolutionaries into action against the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan under the command of hundreds of U.S. instructors stationed in Pakistan? That is why the U.S.S.R. calls for formal guarantees for an end to and non-resumption of intervention in the affairs of Afghanistan. When intervention has been stopped and adequate guarantees have been given, the Soviet troop contingent can be withdrawn from Afghanistan by agreement with its government.

In its statements of May 14, 1980, and August 24, 1981, and also in statements by Afghan leaders, the government of Afghanistan clearly stipulated the guarantees it needs. First, subversive camps should be closed immediately. Second, supplies of weapons and ammunition to counterrevolutionary bandits should be stopped. Third, an official delegation from the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan should be allowed to visit the refugee camps in Pakistan to verify the real number of refugees and explain to them that they are free to return home. The government of Afghanistan guarantees freedom and safety to returnees. It should be specifically stressed that most expatriate Afghans are not enemies of the democratic government, which acts in the vital interests of the people by granting them plots of land and access to sources of water and by providing jobs for them. Many Afghans were confused by complicated developments and took their lead from feudal landowners, on whom they depended economically. Moreover, many do not remain in Pakistan and Iran of their free will, but are prevented from returning by counterrevolutionary leaders, who take advantage of the poverty of the refugees and recruit reinforcements from amongst their number, as well as by the authorities of the host countries who are exploiting the problem. Hence another condition stipulated by Kabul: all refugees wishing to return to their home country should be allowed to do so without any hindrance. Last but not least, **international** guarantees must be provided. This could apply first and foremost to the U.S.S.R. and the U.S., which should pledge to secure Afghan sovereignty.

The U.S. State Department announced late last year that the White House was not averse to giving such guarantees. However, nothing concrete was said and, moreover, that statement has not been backed up by actions. The United States, on the contrary, has so far given guarantees to the bandits, and pledges its continued support. Secretary of State Shultz has said that Washington is with the Afghan counterrevolutionaries, while Congress sets aside "extra" appropriations for them.

The U.S. President recently spoke of "reconciliation" in Afghanistan. But his message was that reconciliation should benefit the counterrevolutionaries. Attempts are being made to decide the fate of Afghanistan without regard for the true interests of the Afghan people and without their government taking part. It is symptomatic that wishes like the one expressed by the U.S. President are quickly forgotten. On the other hand, as a result of the diplomatic efforts of Kabul, the first round of indirect Afghan-Pakistani talks took place in Geneva in June 1982. Six rounds have since taken place and progress has been made on a number of issues. Yet the Pakistani side would not accept the logical link between guarantees and Soviet troop withdrawal. Neither would it agree to direct talks. This position is easy to explain: the American press reported that Washington would not approve a draft agreement between Afghanistan and Pakistan, even if outstanding issues were settled. This really tells the story.

There are of course other parties involved in the undeclared war. Yet the anti-Afghan forces are headed by the U.S., and the main thing is to obtain guarantees from Washington for an end to intervention in the internal affairs of democratic Afghanistan. ■

POSTSCRIPT

The Vaunted Success

On January 20, proclaimed Martin Luther King Day in the United States, President Reagan delivered a radio address in which among other things he said that signal success had been achieved in the matter of racial justice in the United States. He declared that if he were asked what position the blacks occupied today in America he could say: better than ever before. Figures cited in TV programmes on this occasion indicated that the President was, to put it mildly, embellishing the truth. The facts show that unemployment among blacks amounts to 15.6 per cent as against 12.3 per cent in 1978. Poverty is the lot of 42 per cent of black families as compared with 32 per cent in 1980. Nearly two thirds of the blacks polled by the ABC television said they were constantly being discriminated as regards job opportunities, promotion and finding living quarters.

In Exalted Company

The British police recently confiscated a consignment of cocaine valued at 50,000 pounds sterling. Five persons suspected of being implicated in the affair have been arrested, including the owner of a London night club. The most "illustrious" of the detainees is Charles James Spencer Churchill, grandnephew of the former British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and the son and heir of the Duke of Marlborough, Earl of Blandford. Six months ago he was fined for attempting to steal narcotics from a chemist's shop.

There and Back

The Israeli authorities are worried: immigration to the Promised Land is dwindling from year to year and is now at the lowest mark since 1948, when the state of Israel came into being. The New York Times reports that, according to official figures, in 1984, 19,230 persons came to Israel, in 1985 the figure was 11,298 (including over 2,000 Falashas brought to Israel from camps in Sudan). On the other hand, exodus from Israel is growing: in 1984 nearly 18,000 left the country.

Press Under Pressure

Most Americans have little faith in the objectivity of the "free press" in the U.S., the Christian Science Monitor concludes on the basis of a Gallup opinion poll. The American press often takes a one-sided, biased approach to the news, they say. Why? Because pressure is not infrequently brought to bear on the mass media by the Administration and Big Business. Many Americans, says professor Michael Robinson of the George Washington University, also believe that the press is afraid of the CIA and other influential departments.

Doomed Forests

The results of a study made in Göttingen by the Institute for Forest Botany show that pollution of the soil in the F.R.G. has reached such dimensions that a considerable part of plant roots are dying, the F.R.G. Stuttgarter Zeitung reports. The result is that a heavy wind is enough to knock down trees. The only way to save the forests would be to plough up the soil to the depth of one metre, and give it thorough chemical treatment. But this would cost some 70 billion marks. And no funds are made available for such purposes.

Titanic Captain Tug-of-War

The city fathers of Stoke on Trent, the birthplace of the Captain of the Titanic Edward John Smith, ordered a bronze statue to be erected on the occasion of the "wonder" ship's maiden voyage. However, after the Titanic went down they refused to hear of the ill-starred captain. Without more ado they presented the statue to the neighbouring town of Lichfield. Now that the Titanic has been located at the bottom of the ocean and the possibility of raising it has been widely publicized in the press, today's city fathers of Stoke on Trent realized that the statue could attract tourists to their town. However, the Lichfield folk have caught on and are refusing to part with the statue, the West Berlin Tagesspiegel reports.

Throwback

The organizers of the festivities to mark the 150th anniversary of the Bad Nauheim spa in the F.R.G. headed the list of notables to attend the celebration with the name of Princess Margaret zu Hessen und bei Rhein, referring to her as "her royal highness." The Minister of Hesse was farther down the list. When Social Democrat Bundestag deputy Georg Schlaga protested, the spa authorities remained unmoved. "That is her title," they replied. Incidentally, the monarchy in Hesse was ended in 1918.

Records

Windsurfing records are registered for distance and speed. But Marco Topdemir of France decided to set a record of a different kind. He stood on a surf board under sail for 87 hours and 53 minutes.

Drawings by V. Chakiridis

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THE SIX COLUMNS OF JUPITER

There are places on our planet which make an indelible impression on the visitor. One of these is Baalbek in the northern part of the Bekaa Valley in Lebanon. As you drive across the flat, level floor of the valley, the tops of the six columns of the ancient Roman temple of Jupiter, at once graceful and majestic, suddenly rise dramatically against the cloudless blue sky. You are approaching the famous Baalbek.

The largest shrine to Jupiter to survive, the temple was completed in the sixties of the first century A.D. It stands on the remains of a much older structure. A huge temple of Bacchus, the god of fertility, was built next to it in about 150 A.D. Unlike the temple of Jupiter which was almost completely destroyed by earthquakes, the temple of Bacchus has remained virtually intact. The roof and some of the columns have collapsed, but the colonnade surrounding its ancient walls has survived in all its original beauty and harmony, as have the rich and subtle stone carvings on the walls.

The place gave rise to many myths. In Hellenistic times it was the site of the thriving City of the Sun, Heliopolis, with a shrine dedicated to Hadad the Thunderer, worshipped by the Romans as Jupiter Heliopolitanus. The Roman conquerors did not want to antagonize the local deities, and simply identified them with their own. Most writers on the Middle East quote the legend whereby Baalbek was built by Aschmun the devil, and Adam lived nearby. According to another legend, it was here that Cain killed Abel, and then built a fortress in which to take refuge from the curse that was visited on him. The latest theory is that Baalbek was founded by extraterrestrial beings who alone could have been capable of cutting and assembling the huge stone blocks of which it is built.

Indeed, one cannot help but marvel at the three famous monoliths weighing 750 tons apiece which the ancient builders brought into the temple grounds but never used. A fourth monolith was left lying in a stone quarry nearby. It weighs about 2,000 tons and is known as the Pregnancy or Kiss Rock. Barren women still make pilgrimages to Baalbek to stand on or kiss the monolith, hoping it will help them to conceive. It would have taken an estimated 40,000 men to drag the monolith from the quarry to the temples. It is recognized as being the largest monolith ever hewn.

Before the civil war, sumptuous international festivals of music and dance were held at the Baalbek temples, and local people lived prosperously off the tourists who, until a decade ago, came from abroad in their thousands every year. Now the temples serve as a citadel for a local armed organization and few outsiders dare to trespass on its grounds.

E. KORSHUNOV

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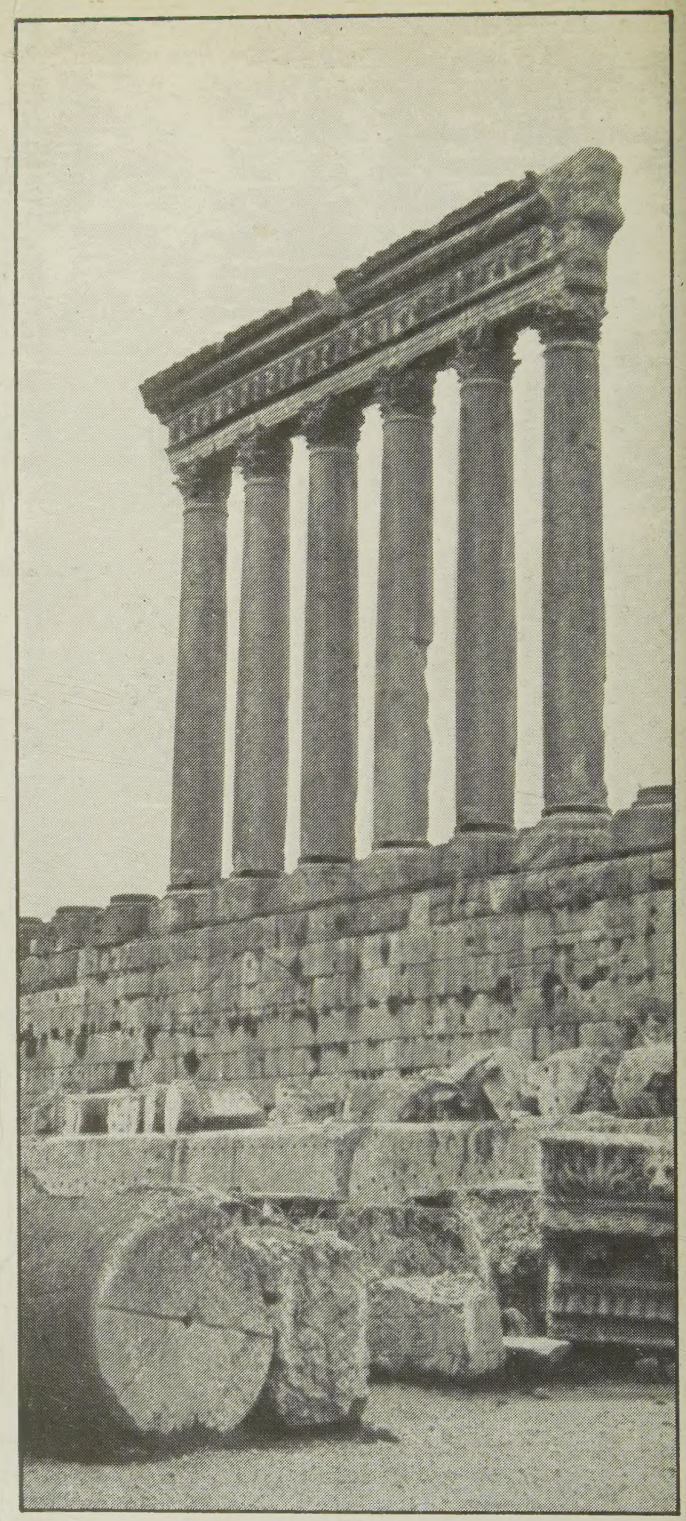
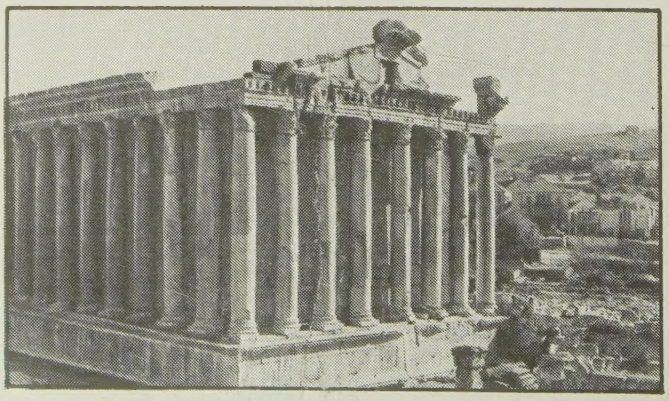


The famous columns of what used to be the temple of Jupiter.

Although business is slack these days, this old souvenir pedlar is still hoping to make a sale.



The temple of Bacchus.

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